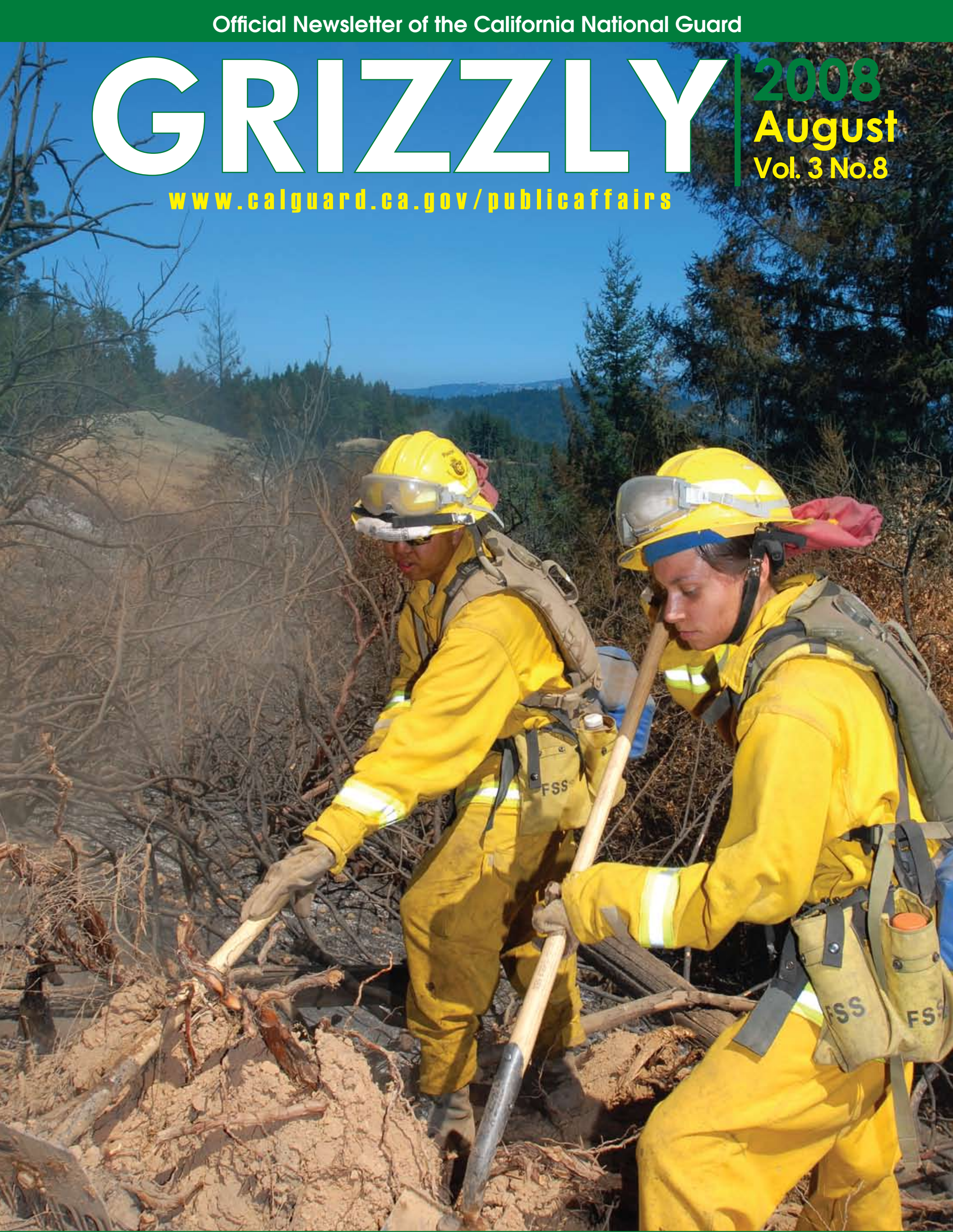


# GRIZZLY

2008  
August  
Vol. 3 No.8

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MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM H. WADE II



COMMAND SGT. MAJ.  
WILLIAM CLARK

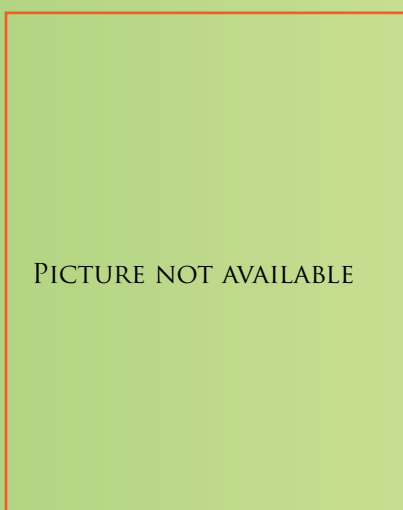


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# Grizzly

The Official Newsletter of the  
California National Guard

**Vol 3. No.8**

**August 2008**

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## FROM THE EDITOR

July was an extremely busy month for the California National Guard. CNG members assisted CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service firefighters with fires in Northern California.

In addition to equipment, the CNG supported the wild-fires with hundreds of personnel in both support roles and actively working on the fire line. At its peak, the CNG had more than 1,300 personnel participating in firefighting efforts. This month most of the articles in the Grizzly magazine highlight the many missions CNG members participated in during this critical time.

A farewell ceremony was held for the 1498th Transportation Company who departed for Camp Atterbury, Ind. for pre-mobilization training before departing for a one year tour in to Iraq. Best wishes for a quick and safe return

## SUBMISSIONS

### Articles:

- ★ 250 – 300 words for half a page, 600-800 words for full page article.
- ★ Include first and last names, and *verify spelling*
- ★ If there is a Public Affairs officer assigned to your unit ensure he/she reviews it.

### Photographs:

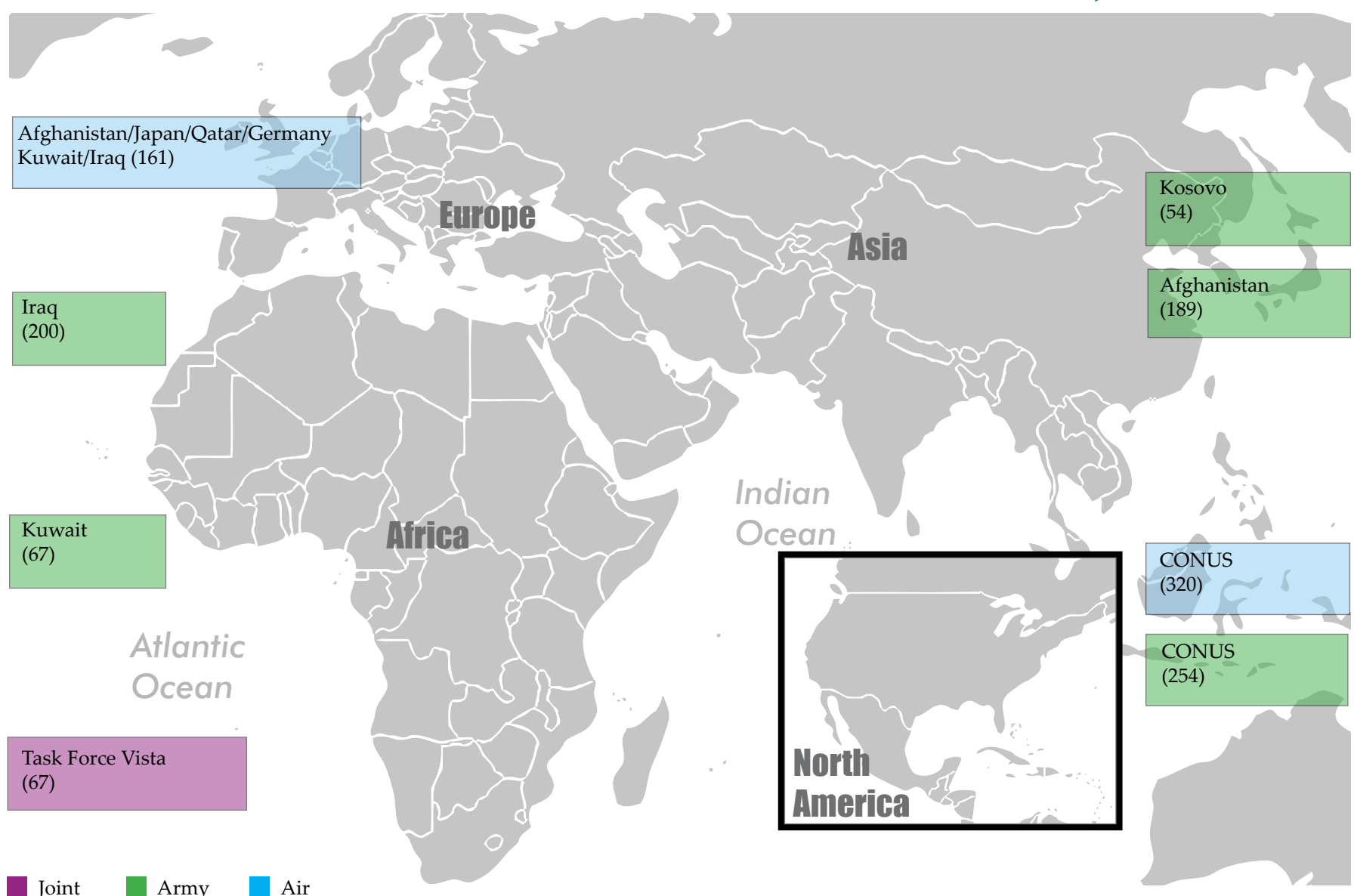
- ★ Highest resolution possible, minimum 300 dpi
- ★ Credits (who took photograph)
- ★ Cutline (what action is taking place in the photograph and identify individuals in photograph)

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COVER PHOTO SPC. EDDIE SIGUENZA

## Where We Are

## THE CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD AS OF JULY 2008



## CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD

# SUPPORTS FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS

As of July 24, 2008

Information provided courtesy of the Joint Forces Headquarters: Joint Operations Center, Office of Government Affairs and Office of Public Affairs.

The California National Guard responded quickly to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's call for support with northern California wildfires. As of July 24, 2008 hundreds of Soldiers and Airmen have been mobilized to help assist in this effort. Currently, there are a total of 2,090 State and Federal fires burning in California of which 2,063 are currently contained and 27 are active. The California National Guard has more than 1200 personnel, with 234 additional personnel from other supporting state National Guards, and a total of 30 military aircraft involved in fire-fighting operations.

The California National Guard, with support from other states, has 17

helicopters supporting fire missions requested by the Office of Emergency Services (OES). These include: one UH-1 (Huey), ten UH-60 (Blackhawks), one UH-60 (Firehawk), and five CH-47 (Chinooks). As of July 24, these helicopters had successfully dropped more than 3.9 million gallons of water and fire retardant. One OH-58 (Kiowas) is providing observation support for the fire mission.

Currently, four U.S. Forest Service Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS) units in the United States are supporting the wildfires in California. Four MAFFS units from North Carolina, Wyoming and Colorado have been released to home

station. To date, the MAFFS aircraft have successfully executed 442 air drops, totaling more than 1.2 million gallons of fire retardant. In addition to the MAFFS, there is 1 RC-26 airplane for infrared fire mapping.

To date more than 600 California National Guard members have been trained and deployed as hand crews for on-the-ground firefighting. The Governor has ordered training for additional Guard personnel to be integrated into the firefighting efforts in phases based on the needs of civilian fire managers and the availability of training resources. Liaison officers in key areas of operation continue to coordinate tasks between OES,

Cal Fire and the California National Guard, and ensure that every mission or tasking is passed to the Joint Operations Center, California National Guard.

In addition to aircraft and personnel, the California National Guard is providing refueling vehicles, and advanced mobile communications platforms to assist with command, control and communications in remote areas.

The California National Guard stands ready and prepared to respond to the fires and all state emergencies in support of civilian authorities to protect the citizens of California.

### Timeline for CNG involvement in current firefighting operations

- \* Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger called the CNG to duty on 22 June in order to assist CAL FIRE in fighting California wild fires.
- \* The President issued a declaration on 28 June ordering federal aid to supplement state and local firefighting efforts in response to wildfires.
- \* Governor Schwarzenegger held a press conference on 1 July ordering 200 California National Guard Soldiers to provide direct ground support to help CAL FIRE with the current wildfire threat in Northern California.
- \* Governor Schwarzenegger held a press conference on 4 July ordering an additional 200 Soldiers to provide ground support to help CAL FIRE with the current wildfire threat throughout California.
- \* On July 11, the Governor ordered an additional 2,000 California National Guard citizen Soldiers and Airman to complete firefighting training and be phased in during the coming months to augment firefighting efforts for the remainder of the fire season.

### Aviation

- \* The California National Guard has provided a sustained force of rotary-winged aircraft to fight California Wildfires with up to 14 helicopters actively fighting fires at one time. These aircraft included UH-60 Blackhawks, OH-58 Kiowas for observation, CH-47 Chinooks, UH-1 Hueys to perform support operations and the Firehawk. Rotary-winged aircraft operating under the CNG have dropped nearly four million gallons of water.
- \* The California National Guard also provided the following fixed-wing aircraft in support of the wild fires: (1) RC-26 providing aerial imagery support, one MC-130P from Moffett Federal Air Field and one C-130J from Channel Island on stand-by for Search and Rescue operations. In addition, the CNG provided two MAFFS that were fitted onto one C-130H from Colorado and one from North Carolina along with six other MAFFS from the North Carolina Air National Guard, Colorado Air Force Reserve and the Wyoming Air National Guard. To date, (MAFFS) have dropped more than 1.1 million gallons of retardant.

### Other Ground mission firefighting operations

- \* The California National Guard deployed a highly mobile crash, fire rescue firefighting vehicle from the 233rd Engineer Fire Fighting Team to King City airport which provided crash rescue response to a multi-agency firefighting force.
- \* Along with aircraft, the CNG provided two advanced mobile communications and data platforms (IC4U) to assist with command and control in remote areas.
- \* The CNG deployed eight bulldozers from the 579th Engineer Bn. to assist in fire control operations building fire lines in various locations in California.

### Hand Crews

- \* On July 1st Governor Schwarzenegger ordered the CNG to provide personnel to be trained as hand-crews for future firefighting missions. These Soldiers and Airmen will be integrated into the firefighting efforts in phases based on the needs of civilian fire managers and the availability of training resources.
- \* The additional troops will provide needed relief for firefighters on the front lines, and help to sustain California's firefighting efforts throughout the summer and into the traditional fire season.
- \* The Soldiers received training at the Wildland Fire Training Center located at McClellan Air Park in Sacramento, Calif., where they learn techniques to support firemen on the front lines of the wild fires.
- \* Since the Governor's initial call the CNG has trained over 700 soldiers as Type II hand crews. The primary function of these type II crews is to construct a fire line by hand in areas where heavy machinery can not be used due to terrain or environmental considerations.
- \* The initial groups of Guard hand crews, known as Task Force Axe, and Task Force Pick are currently deployed to fires in Northern California.
- \* Task Force Axe began working on the fire line July 10 at various locations around Sugar Loaf Mt. in Mendocino County and continues to do support fire fighting efforts in that area.
- \* Task Force Pick began working on the fire line July 16 on the Telephone and Lime fires and continues to do support fire fighting efforts in that area.
- \* Task Force shovel has completed fire training and is on standby to support fire fighting efforts upon request.
- \* The CNG will continue to train additional hand crews in the coming weeks to ensure a more rapid response capability in the event these crews are needed in the future. If not immediately required for firefighting duties, these newly trained crews will demobilize until called upon for future operations.

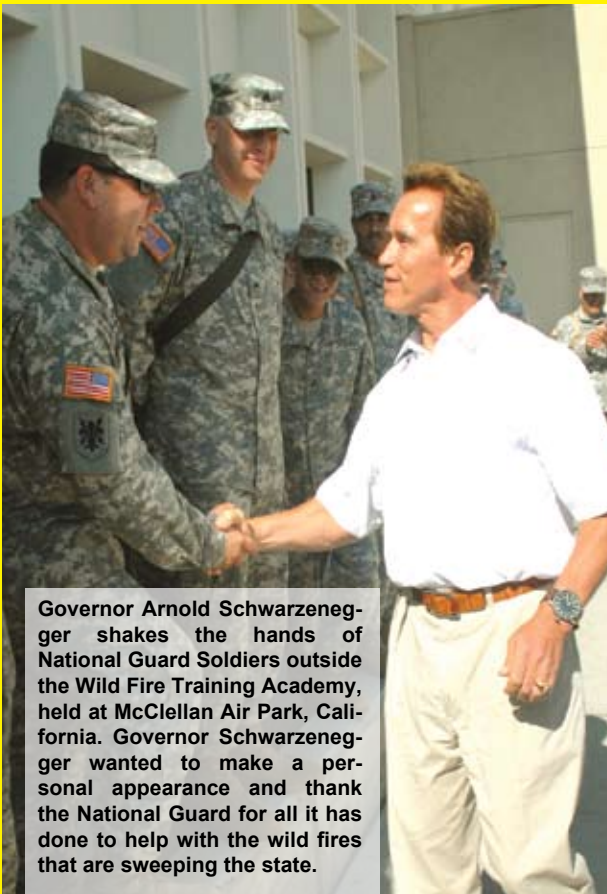
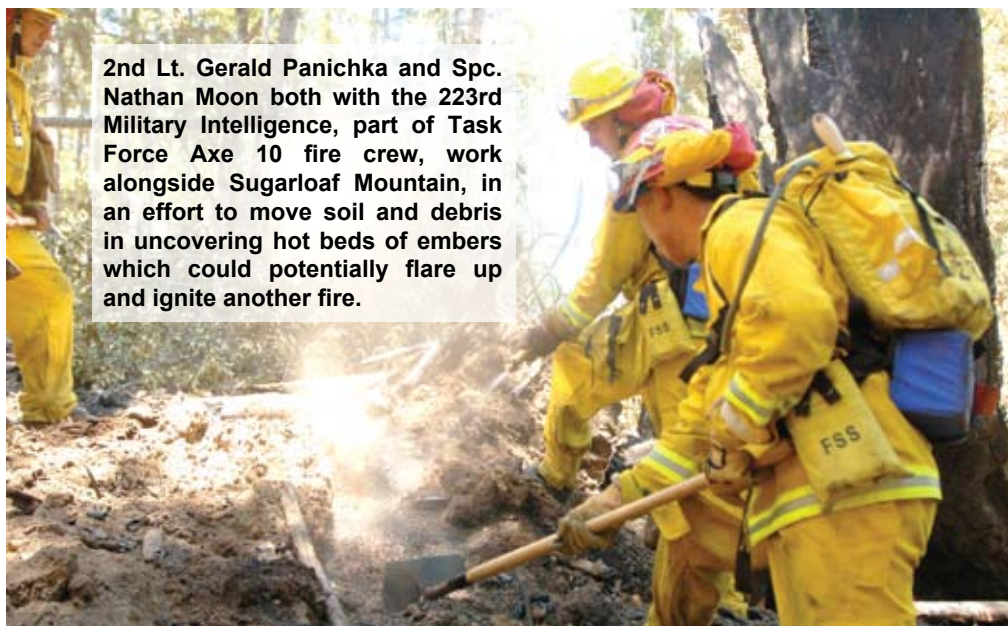


PHOTO BY PFC. DARRIEL SWATTS

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger shakes the hands of National Guard Soldiers outside the Wild Fire Training Academy, held at McClellan Air Park, California. Governor Schwarzenegger wanted to make a personal appearance and thank the National Guard for all it has done to help with the wild fires that are sweeping the state.

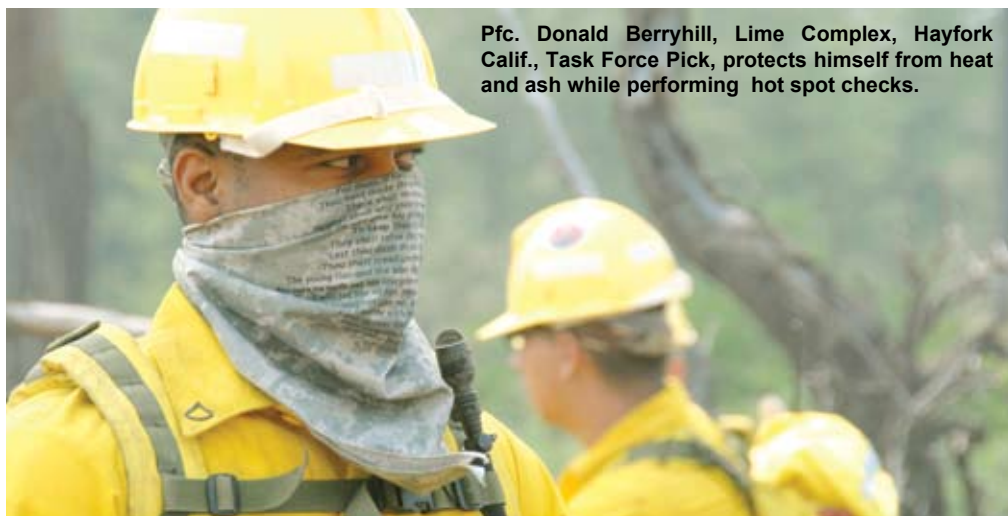


PHOTO BY SGT. MARK BROWN



2nd Lt. Gerald Panichka and Spc. Nathan Moon both with the 223rd Military Intelligence, part of Task Force Axe 10 fire crew, work alongside Sugarloaf Mountain, in an effort to move soil and debris in uncovering hot beds of embers which could potentially flare up and ignite another fire.

PHOTO BY TECH SGT. ROBIN MEREDITH



Pfc. Donald Berryhill, Lime Complex, Hayfork Calif., Task Force Pick, protects himself from heat and ash while performing hot spot checks.



PHOTO BY TECH SGT. ROBIN MEREDITH

California National Guard, A Company 4th Platoon, Lime Complex, Task Force Pick, march to their drop point to start cold trail patrol looking for hot spots.

## CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD TRAIN AS FIREFIGHTERS

BY STAFF SGT. ANDREW J. HUGHAN

For the first time in 30 years Soldiers and Airmen from the California National Guard are trained and fighting ravaging wildfires across the state alongside CAL FIRE and U.S. Forest Service firefighters.

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger called the Guard to duty on June 22, just one day after lightning sparked fires in Butte County, 100 miles north of Sacramento. Just a week later on June 28 the President issued a declaration ordering federal aid to supplement state and local firefighting efforts.

The first 200 Soldiers were activated on July 4 and began training at McClellan Air Park in Sacramento, another 200 mobilized a few days later and were sent forward to assist and relieve exhausted firefighters.

The additional 2,000 National Guard troops were ordered to state active duty by the Governor on July 11 to boost the state's ongoing firefighting efforts and prepare for the threat of additional fires over the next several months.

"We already have 400 Guard members on the front lines, and once these new troops are trained and certified, they will be ready to pitch

in at a moment's notice throughout the fire season," Schwarzenegger said. The federal government also committed to sending out-of-state firefighters to train these additional California Guard personnel on critical firefighting techniques.

"Having their assistance is going to be critical as we go forward into this summer of fire fighting," said CAL FIRE Capt. Mark Whaling. "They have the same basic fire training that every new firefighter has, so if any of these fires escape their containment lines they will be able to control them so we can get the tired crews back to base camps for rest."

More than 200 Air National Guard personnel from across the state responded for wildfire training July 23 to train on fire behavior, fire safety, and how to create fire containment lines using hand tools at McClellan Air Park with the U.S. Forest Service and will be available for duty over the next few weeks. After completing training, the Airmen will be available to support CAL FIRE, and the firefighter training remains current for one year after completion.

"The Soldiers will be doing duties that CAL FIRE regularly does. It's

just that the volume of fire this year is so much with so many fires ... this is the challenge the Guard will help us meet," Whaling said.

The training that CAL FIRE is doing is not a "one-shot" evolution, all the training records are kept and if Guard personnel are needed later this summer, or even next year, CAL FIRE can easily and quickly identify trained personnel and bring them to the lines for much needed assistance.

The troops also received basic conditioning that consisted of trail hikes in full gear, in the hot sun, multiple times a day, to prepare for what promises to be very difficult work ahead.

"It's a great experience so far. There is a definite science and process to firefighting that you don't know about until you've been on a hand crew out here for a while," said Sgt. Mark Walch.

Walch is a high school teacher in Chico and a Soldier with Alpha Company, 297th Support Detachment, who dropped the summer classes he was taking and reported to the Oroville Armory within hours of the mobilization.

"The fires in Butte County are threatening my hometown of Paradise, so it's doubly important to me to be here. I'm a small cog in the wheel but every little thing counts," Walch said.

The Soldiers will be grouped into 20-person teams and distributed around the state to wherever the fire officials need them and where the Soldiers can be used most effectively and safely.

"These types of fires are an endurance race, so they will help us stretch our resources so we can move forward and contain the existing and new fires as they pop up," Whaling said.

One CAL FIRE official believes the Guard is an excellent and recurring source of trained and experienced firefighters to help contain and control fires in the state.

"I see this as the future," said CAL FIRE assistant captain Dan Burns. "Once the training is complete, we have a record of every Soldier and will be able to recall them and get them to the lines quickly. I see this as only the beginning."



# NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU CHIEF: FIREFIGHTING AND FLOOD EFFORTS "OUTSTANDING"

BY AIR FORCE MASTER SGT. MIKE SMITH AND ARMY STAFF SGT. JIM GREENHILL

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - Assessing the National Guard's California fire and Midwest flood-fighting efforts first-hand Thursday and Friday, the chief of the National Guard Bureau visited adjutants general and troops in impacted states.

"They're handling very difficult and complex issues in a very competent and professional manner," Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum said during a stop in Iowa. "The National Guard response has been generally superb, a benchmark case study in cooperation among the states for mutual support and cooperation during an emergency. They've achieved the correct balance between local, state and federal response in a coordinated and synchronized manner."

Blum had been scheduled to talk with officers participating in a Joint Task Force Commanders' Training Course at U.S. Northern Command in Colorado Springs on Friday. With more than 280 Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen and 23 National Guard helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft helping California firefighters and more than 2,100 troops and an abundance of equipment tackling Midwest floods, Blum adjusted his itinerary to assess both missions.

"It's important to get eyes-on so that we have a comprehensive operating picture of exactly what is being done and we have a clear understanding of what other personnel or equipment may be necessary to move to the area so that we don't leave the adjutant general or the governor short of any capability presently required or foreseeable to deal with the emergency in the future," Blum said. "We like to stay ahead of the emergency."

The chief of the NGB's questions for the California and Iowa adjutants general as he visited their burning or flooded states included whether they have what they need, how efforts could be improved and what results they are achieving.

"In order to save lives, minimize destruction and assist recovery, we need the right capability, in the right quantity, where and when it's needed," Blum said. "The adjutants general assess the situation, identify immediate requirements and send the National Guard's critical capabilities to meet our communities' needs."

California faces hundreds of lightning-sparked wildfires. Parts of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri and

Wisconsin have been inundated with historic Mississippi River flooding. The National Guard has played vital roles in both domestic disasters.

The Guard's key contribution to the fires comes from above: OH-58 Kiowa, UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopters spot fires and drop water to support civilian firefighters. RC-26 aircraft give state fire managers vital reconnaissance that improves their ability to effectively focus firefighting efforts. C-130 Hercules aircraft drop flame-retardant that halts advancing fire dead in its tracks.

Blum's Thursday visit to California included a Sacramento stop for a face-to-face meeting with Maj. Gen. William Wade, the adjutant general. Then, the chief and the adjutant general met with troops and the state firefighters they are assisting at Chico Municipal Airport.

He thanked and debriefed Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen and their Cal Fire-Butte County counterparts before pausing to give a (Chico, Calif.) Enterprise Record reporter his assessment that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger -commander-in-chief of the California National Guard - has been superbly competent handling Northern California fires over the past month and has a good handle on providing resources to extinguish the blazes.

He called the governor a forward-leaning person who wants to get in front of the problem, not behind it. He also said the governor is proactive, engaged and knowledgeable about current lightning fires, which have burned 7,500 acres in Butte

County alone so far, the Enterprise Record reported.

During Blum's visit, two C-130 Hercules planes were loaded with retardant and took off toward Whiskeytown, the newspaper reported. Four of eight firefighting C-130s that exist in the United States are currently in the Chico area. More are expected to arrive in the next week, Blum told crews.

MAFFS are Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems. Initially, air crews were grounded by smoke that obscured visibility.

When crises happen, Guard states team up to respond. C-130s from North Carolina and Wyoming have joined California's own aircraft to suppress the flames, and the adjutant general was delighted to see the planes and their crews ready to roll.

"These planes are as good as gold," Maj. Gen. Wade said. "They really earn their money for what they do. The same combat skills these pilots accrue in combat are the same skills they use to suppress wildfires - so their techniques, skills and abilities are absolute gold in an environment like this."

"There's a lot of fire out there," said Air Guard Lt. Col. Mark Christian, 156th Airlift Squadron. "We love to get out here and fly every day and fly as much as we can. That's why we're here."

After Chico, it was on to Colorado Springs for the NGB chief, the only stop Blum had originally planned for, where he assessed Joint Incident Site Communications Capa-

bility equipment of exactly the kind vital to firefighting and flood responses before addressing officers who are training to command the joint task forces also so critical to domestic disaster responses.

"The National Guard is the first military responder during natural disasters in the homeland," Blum said. "The National Guard's unique capabilities enhance the synchronization with Northern Command and the Department of Defense's partnership with the Department of Homeland Security, ensuring a unity of effort."

Blum spoke to 80 officers being certified and trained to lead National Guard joint task forces on domestic missions like the California fires and Midwest floods.

On Friday, he continued to Iowa, where he planned to ask Maj. Gen. Ron Dardis, the adjutant general, the same sorts of questions as those he raised in California - only this time targeted at containing water rather than fighting fire.

In both California and Iowa, the chief was meeting with familiar faces. National Guard leaders don't exchange business cards during a crisis - they spend years developing relationships that pay off when minutes matter. As the leader of the NGB, Blum works closely with the governors and their adjutants general to continuously assess the National Guard's contribution domestically and worldwide.

Previously, for example, he traveled to Kosovo with Gov. Culver to meet with the governor's National Guard troops deployed there, the type of trip that cements partnerships vital in a state's time of need.

"The National Guard are the nation's first military responders, and the governors are the commanders in chief of those forces," Blum explained.

Guardmembers also remained on duty on numerous overseas missions, including in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"The nation is depending on us to do this and expects us to do this, and we're not going to fail the nation," Blum said. "The Minutemen and -women of the National Guard have been doing this kind of work for 272 years and will continue to do this as long as there's a United States of America. We owe it to the American people to remain always ready, always there."



PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DAVID J. LOEFFLER

Major General William H. Wade II (Commander, California National Guard), Lieutenant General Stephen H. Blum (Chief, National Guard Bureau) and Major General Dennis G. Lucas (Commander, California Air National Guard) appear in front of a C-130 Hercules cargo aircraft on loan from North Carolina Air National Guard's 145th Airlift Wing based at Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. The C-130 and its crew provided support to the wildfire fighting efforts.



# WELCOME HOME

## 1113TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY

San Luis Obispo, Calif. – More than 100 California National Guard Soldiers from the San Jose, Calif. based 1113th Transportation Company returned from a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

These Soldiers from all over California deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in May of last year providing ground transportation for supplies and equipment in and out of Kuwait as well as throughout Iraq.

The “ironhorse” company executed 270 missions transporting provisions in Iraq covering 7.3 million miles of travel. They delivered and recouped more than 200,000 tons of material and equipment, during which time they also provided security for more than 4,100 foreign national drivers embedded in their convoys.

The California National Guard is proud to welcome back these dedicated Soldiers, three of which are Purple Heart recipients as well as numerous Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and Army Achievement Medal recipients.

PHOTOS BY PFC. DARIEL SWATTS AND ANNETTE SIEBERT





# OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

## Mission

The Office of Governmental Affairs serves as the Military Department's liaison with the Governor's office, the State Legislature and our Congressional Representatives as well as other local, state and federal governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations. A primary function of Governmental Affairs is to identify the legislative needs of the Military Department and the Soldiers and Airmen of the California National Guard and attain legislative support for those needs from our elected officials. Governmental Affairs monitors and reports on state and federal legislation that impact the Military Department and the California National Guard, as well as provides technical information for legislative committees and staff and provides testimony at Senate and Assembly committee hearings. Governmental Affairs also manages and responds to legislative and Congressional inquiries received from elected officials' constituents, as well as works special projects, as requested from our elected officials and other state agencies.

This year the California Military Department has tracked more than 70 State legislative issues that could affect its members. The following are a few of the most important pieces of legislation from this year's agenda. For more information you can call 916-854-3705.

### AB 3020(Salas) State Contract Act

This bill will make a correction to the Public Contracts Code (PCC) by inserting the Military Department into the list of departments that may contract for public works projects. This revision will allow the Military Department to carry out the Department's mission of constructing and renovating facilities for the California National Guard. California Military and Veterans Code (CMVC) §434 authorizes The Adjutant General, of the Military Department, to build and construct National Guard armories, if appropriations have been made by the Legislature. A discrepancy exists between CMVC §434 and the PCC §10106, which governs public works contracts.

### SB 1752(Wyland) California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program

This bill would have established the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program and would have required The Adjutant General to establish specific policies and procedures necessary to implement the program. Senate Bill 1752 would have established a much-deserved state educational benefit for California National Guard (CNG) members; to strengthen retention incentives for qualified and experienced members of the California Army and Air National Guard.

### SB 1401(Simitian) Traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder

This bill will require the Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) to assist an eligible member or veteran to obtain a health screening for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This bill will also require The Adjutant General to develop a plan for outreach to eligible members of the California National Guard who have returned from combat and remain on duty. This bill further establishes additional requirements for outreach to veterans who are affected by a TBI and PTSD, increasing the probability that service members receive proper treatment and care.

### SB 1353(Negrete McLeod) State employees: military benefits

This bill will authorize the Governor to issue an executive order extending existing benefits for state employees who are members of the California National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve and are called to federal active duty from 730 days (24 months) to 1,825 days (60 months). This bill extends compensation and other benefits provided to permanent state employees who are ordered to federal active duty pursuant to United States Code Title 10 and who must serve on active duty for more than two years per deployment.



## THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

### HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS AS A GUARD MEMBER

As citizens we all have the right to contact our elected representatives about political issues that are of concern to us. This is a proud tradition in our American Democracy. Expressing your opinion can also have a substantial impact on the issues you care about. Elected officials are just that; elected. They need your support to stay in office, so it is important to let them know about issues that affect you.

Communicating with elected officials is easy. You can call them,

write them, fax them or visit their offices in person. For family of service members, a relationship to a service member does not limit a family member's right to communicate with an elected representative. However, as a member of the National Guard, you should be aware of just a few restrictions that impact our ability to communicate on political issues.

First, any personal communication on a political issue by a service member with an elected official

must neither represent nor appear to be an official endorsement or representation by the California National Guard. Therefore, such communication must be conducted in a personal capacity, when not in a duty status, and not in uniform.

Second, government resources may not be used for personal communication on a political issue. Official duty positions, official titles, and official government letterhead may not be used for personal communication on a political

issue with elected representatives. If you have questions, feel free to contact your local Judge Advocate prior to initiating communication.

While following these brief rules, be sure to exercise your right to be heard. You can make a difference!



# PURSUING STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE FOR CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARDSMEN

The Military Department, the Governor and the Legislature have been working hard over the last few years to get state education benefits established for members of the California National Guard. The California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (CNGEAAP) would offer Soldiers and Airmen valuable financial benefits towards higher education and would help retain the best and brightest for our future force.

The Legislature has considered other bills within the last few years that would establish education or other benefits for National Guard members; however, no substantial benefit for the state's Guard has yet to be approved. The Military Department, for years, has sought a substantive educational assistance program consistent with what other states provide to their National Guard Soldiers and Airmen. Although the federal government provides hundreds of millions in funding each year to equip, train, and sustain the CNG (\$802.6 million for federal fiscal year 2007), the retention of National Guard troops remains a state responsibility.

Adequate state education benefits for Guard members have yet to be approved, but not from a lack of trying. In 2003, the "National Guard Assumption Program for Loans for Education" (NGAPLE)

was established by the Legislature, but no funding was included to start the program. In 2006, the Legislature funded up to 100 loan assumption awards. The loan assumption agreements were issued to 100 qualified members in order to assist with payments for outstanding student loans. However, the NGAPLE never fully allowed The Adjutant General the flexibility needed to create a tangible retention incentive and the NGAPLE program ended in July 2007.

In 2006, Assemblymember Joe Nation introduced Assembly Bill 1923, which would have provided a college tuition waiver program for all qualified members of the CNG. This legislation was passed on the Assembly side, but failed passage in the Senate Education Committee.

In 2007, the Governor included \$1.7 million in his proposed 2007-08 budget that, along with Senate Bill 983, would have created a National Guard Education Assistance Program. Unfortunately, the Legislature failed to agree on the proper method of establishing an education program for Guard members and the initiative failed both the budget and legislative process. The Legislature instructed the Guard come back with a more defined program.

Again in 2008, the Governor's Office and the Military Department attempted a two-prong approach to establish education benefits. The Governor included \$1.8 million in his 2008-09 Proposed Budget to fund the first half year of the Guard's Education Assistance Program. Annual funding of \$3.3 million would be needed for the following fiscal year for full program implementation. This budget initiative was approved by the Assembly Budget Committee, but was rejected by the Senate Budget Committee. It was then heard by the Legislature's Joint Budget Conference Committee, where it was eventually denied in early July.

During this same period, Senate Bill 1752 was introduced by Senator Wyland to establish a Guard education assistance award program and would have required The Adjutant General to establish specific policies and procedures necessary to implement the program. After many discussions and negotiations, SB 1752 was passed in a very difficult policy committee, Senate Education, where the program's policies and procedures were meticulously reviewed and adjusted. Unfortunately, Senate Bill 1752 will most likely die in Senate Appropriations due to fiscal constraints, with the Committee citing the \$15 billion budget deficit the state is currently facing.

California is one of only a handful of states that do not offer any tangible, state-sponsored incentives to belong to the National Guard, yet the CNG continues to be one of the most-tasked states in the nation. This has often made it difficult to retain Soldiers and Airmen who are constantly called upon in times of need, both at home and abroad, but do not receive the state benefits that most other states have. In fact, California provides the fewest state benefits to its National Guard of the 54 states and territories, and as a result, has the smallest National Guard, as measured per capita, of all the states.

State benefits are crucial for retention of our valuable, highly-trained Soldiers and Airmen. Guard Leadership and the Office of Governmental Affairs will continue to work towards establishing critically needed state benefits to ensure the CNG maintains the capability to respond as quickly and effectively as it has over the years in emergencies like Hurricane Katrina, Operation Jumpstart, California wildfires and fighting the war on terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan and throughout the world.

Our Soldiers and Airmen are committed to the safety and security of California and its citizens, and deserve the same commitment from their state.





# LOGISTICS READINESS TRAINING FOR NIGERIAN AIRFORCE

BY MAJ. ABRAHAM QUINTEROS AND LT. COL. JOHN CONNOLLY

In, April 2008, Chief Master Sgt. Joel Reynoso, Major Abe Quinteros and Lt. Col. John Connolly, all of the 146th Logistics Readiness Squadron, returned from a most rewarding experience in Lagos, Nigeria. The effective coordination was conducted by Capt. Clayton Smith from California State Headquarters and Maj. Jeffrey Price. Maj. Jeffrey Price, the bilateral affairs officer currently serving tour in Nigeria, was able to close many of the gaps, making arrangements for the arrival of the California team and supplying many of the necessities for both students and instructors, making the class a success. The overall mission objective was to familiarize members of the Nigerian Air Force with an Overview of the Airlift Affiliation process while contributing to the joint partnership program that continues to bring California and Nigeria even closer together.

The class consisted of 20 Nigerian Air Force members varying from supply clerks to C-130 loadmasters to general LRS personnel. Rank structure of the class contained officers up to the grade of colonel, warrant officers and enlisted personnel. All Nigerian senior officers were involved and diplomatic relations were clearly enhanced.

The learning environment consisted of approximately 70 percent classroom study and 30 percent field experience.

Major Quinteros and Chief Master Sgt. Reynoso using material from the Airlift Affiliation course that had been taught to our own airman, assembled a lesson to give an overview of material preparation for airlift to load planning a C130E, the cargo aircraft used by the Nigerian Air Force. From the beginning Lt. Col. Connolly placed an emphasis on assuring a positive channel of questions and answers throughout the conference. Each day the students were presented with group activities in the planning process of preparing cargo for airlift. From joint inspection, figuring center of balance to paper planning different loads on a C130E, these practice helped compliment the learning process. To further build on the learning objectives of the day, homework was assigned daily.

On the second day the instructors informed the class to come in their work utility uniforms and be prepared for hands instruction. The students were taught to take the center of balance on various vehicles and later in the day the class

practiced palletizing material on a 463L pallet. To close the day the class walked out to a C130. The instructors demonstrated the use of a chain device to secure vehicles to the aircraft floor, as well as, identify pallet positions identified on the aircraft. The lesson on the aircraft helped solidify and demonstrate the importance of proper airlift preparation and the importance of material placement within the aircraft for aircraft center of balance. This hands-on lesson was to prepare students for next days lesson on load planning.

The instructors commented that the Nigerian student performance was remarkable. Where they lacked in resources and experience, they made up for in exceptional intelligence as well as determination to learn the subject matter. There was a considerable eagerness to absorb the instructed information from each pupil. In the end, every student finished with a minimum of 90 percent on the final exam.

To build on relations between student and instructors, the instructors would join the class for lunch in the base cafeteria. This exchange allowed the students to ask more candid questions about life in the

U.S. and know the instructors on a more personnel level. It allowed for good airmen to airmen exchange.

Instructors further commented on the hospitality of the base personnel, air base commanders and general population of Lagos. As for future visitations, the Nigerian air command staff remarked that they would be open to any and all future seminars.

A student survey was conducted following the seminar resulting in overwhelmingly positive feedback. Student remarks stressed that they learned volumes of information in four days and that they wish there had been more time to continue. There only complaint was that the course was to short.

In conclusion, the gain of the trip was monumental. The students repeatedly expressed their gratitude while the Nigerian command staff echoed similar praise while speaking in warm sentiment of the newly enhanced U.S.-Nigerian partnership. The team California team felt they mutually benefited from their experience with the Nigerians citing not just the Nigerian eagerness and innovation but their commitment to mission objectives.

Major Abe Quinteros, Chief Master Sgt. Joel Reynoso and Lt. Col. John Connolly pose with members of the Nigerian Air Force.





Tech. Sgt. Karl Kooser, a 163rd Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels craftsman, who is deployed and assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron in Southwest Asia, reviews documents with Gul Al-Hussani (left) and Mahmoud Suleman (right) at an undisclosed construction material site.



Standing atop a mound of sand, Tech. Sgt. Karl Kooser, a 163rd Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels craftsman assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron in Southwest Asia, conducts perimeter defense at a construction material site. Sergeant Kooser, who has been deployed since May, provides force protection for personnel and vehicles bringing materials for various construction projects at an undisclosed base.



# DEPLOYED GRIZZLY 'PAVES' WAY FOR SECURE RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS

BY CAPT. AL BOSCO

What do the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing, security forces, and construction have in common? Not a lot unless you're Tech. Sgt. Karl Kooser, a 163rd Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels craftsman, who is currently deployed to Southwest Asia as a security forces augmentee.

Assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Sergeant Kooser serves as noncommissioned officer-in-charge of a team that provides escort and force protection services for Third Country Nationals, or TCNs, bringing construction materials to an undisclosed base in the region. The team, also referred to as the Gravel, Asphalt and Concrete Team, travels outside the base's "safe zone" each day to nearby concrete or asphalt plants or rock quarries to meet foreign individuals responsible for obtaining the materials needed for the base's various construction projects. Additionally, the team provides security for personnel and vehicles transporting the materials – a job Sergeant Kooser said begins well before he and his team depart the base.

"My day begins between midnight and 3 a.m.," Sgt. Kooser said. "I arrive ahead of the rest of my team and ensure that the mission brief, vehicles, supplies and personnel are ready for the mission. Once the team has gathered at our reporting time, I give a mission brief that includes photographs of the location we will be going to, current intelligence assessments, weather conditions, and rally points and operating procedures should a situation develop."

Once "outside the wire," Sgt. Kooser and his team conduct a protective sweep of the area and once at the material site they inspect awaiting

construction vehicles to ensure nothing has been tampered with and there is no risk of hazardous materials making its way back to base. Once Sgt. Kooser is confident the area is safe and secure, the team provides force protection for the convoy of personnel and vehicles as they travel to the construction sites on base.

"When we arrive at the material gathering site we thoroughly inspect

move as a convoy to the base under Sergeant Kooser and his teams' watchful eyes.

"Once we secure the vehicles and drivers, nothing leaves our sight until we escort it from the base," Sgt. Kooser added.

But even after a mission is complete, Sgt. Kooser's job is not done. In fact he said most of his time is spent getting ready for the next mission.

Kooser remarked that this deployment, his third in two years and fifth since 1991, has had its highlights.

"One of the most flattering moments was when the superintendent from Syria brought his son to meet us because, in his own words, he wanted 'to show his son what Americans were like and that even though America is very, very powerful, the people are very nice and good people despite what others in the Arab world may say,'" described Sgt. Kooser. "He was very cordial and warm. To me this was one of the highlights of the deployment so far."

"It's been great to get out and see what the people that live and work here are like and what they think," Sgt. Kooser said. "They are very interesting, hard-working people, who are very curious about the U.S. Everyone waves at us when they see us at a location, and I've been told by several people that they love America."

Having been deployed since May, Sgt. Kooser is looking forward to returning to his family and the 163d in September.

"I am looking forward to coming home to my family," he said. "It's been hard on my wife not having me there, and my son has been asking more questions this time around and wants to know if other little boys' daddies are gone too."

"I'm also anxious to get back to the wing. Everyone has been so supportive. It is a great bunch of people and I am doing my best to represent [the wing] well over here."

Staff Sgt. Daryl Forbes, a deployed security escort team member, and Tech. Sgt. Karl Kooser, a 163rd Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels craftsman who is deployed and assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron in Southwest Asia, provide security ahead of a convoy at an undisclosed location. Sgt. Kooser and a team of security forces members provide force protection for personnel and vehicles transporting construction materials for projects at an undisclosed base.



each vehicle to ensure it doesn't contain anything that could harm the base or its personnel," said Sgt. Kooser. "Additionally, a big part of our mission is to prevent anything that could be used for intelligence gathering, so we physically search each driver and vehicle occupant for any contraband, such as cell phones, cameras, pens, paper or other materials that can be used to record information." Once the inspections are complete, the vehicles prepare to

"After we return from our mission, I conduct a debrief and team members provide feedback as to what we did right, what we can improve, and things they would like to receive additional training on," said Sgt. Kooser. "The balance of my day is then spent scheduling, setting up training and attending meetings to plan upcoming missions."

Despite the long hours and sometimes dangerous conditions, Sgt.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF 163RD LRS

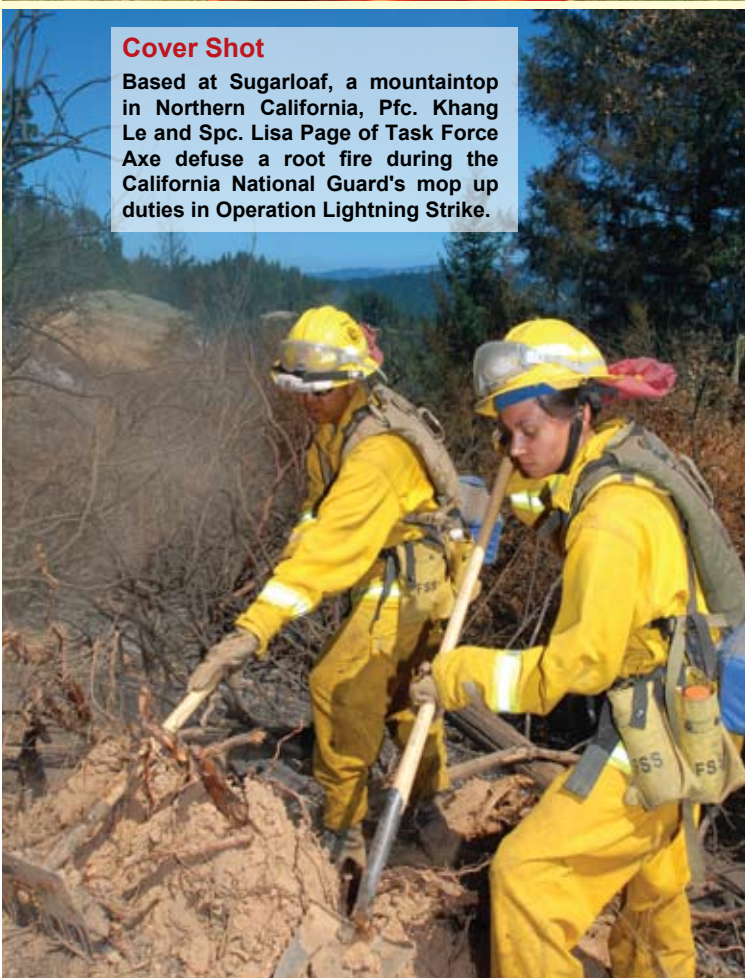


Member of Task Force Axe participating in fire tent training.

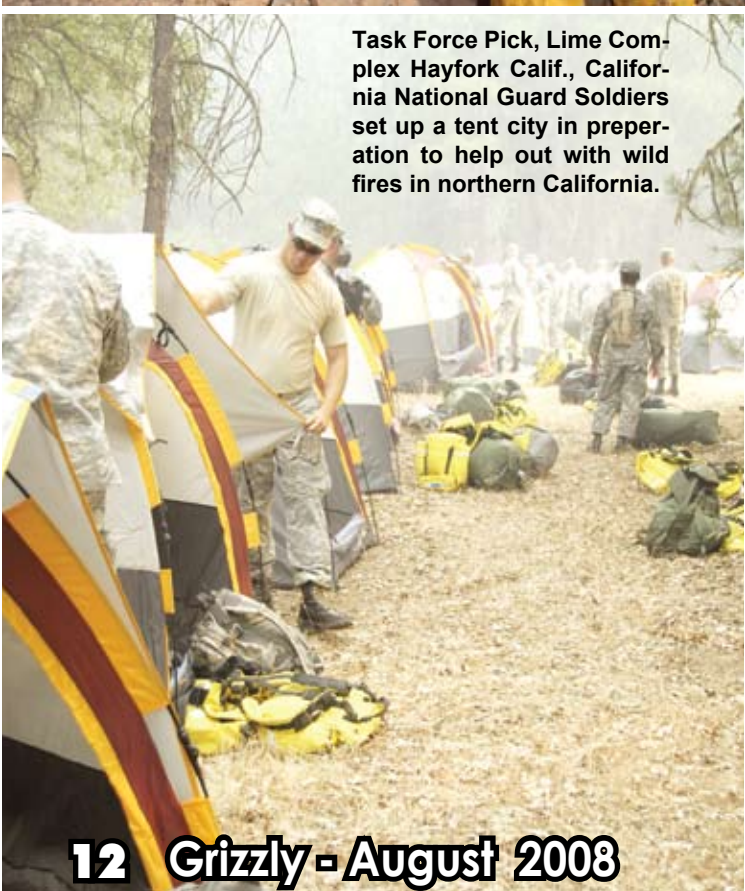


#### Cover Shot

Based at Sugarloaf, a mountaintop in Northern California, Pfc. Khang Le and Spc. Lisa Page of Task Force Axe defuse a root fire during the California National Guard's mop up duties in Operation Lightning Strike.



Task Force Pick, Lime Complex Hayfork Calif., California National Guard Soldiers set up a tent city in preparation to help out with wild fires in northern California.



Pfc. Christopher Cook with the 579th Engineer Battalion conducts preventative maintenance checks at the Red Bluff Armory.



Jolly 92, an HH-60G Pave Hawk from the 129th Rescue Wing, a California Air National Guard unit based out of Moffett Federal Airfield near Mountain View, Calif., performs multiple water bucket missions over Butte County wildfires in California. The wing is the only unit in the Air Force qualified to participate in water bucket drops. There are currently 21 rotary-wing aircraft supporting the California wild fires, nine aircraft from other states.

Capt. Bob Mariotti, a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot assigned to the California National Guard's 1-140th Air Assault Battalion located in Los Alamitos, Calif., conducts a pre-flight check of his aircraft at Mather Field before departing for an annual instrument flying evaluation.







Capt. Amy Horton, 302nd Airlift Wing maintenance group executive officer, based out of Colorado Springs, Co. rinses the AF Reserve's C-130H of the sticky retardant following a 3,000 gallon drop over the West Basin Fire. Every C-130 equipped with the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) in the military's arsenal has been activated to assist in Northern California's firefighting efforts.

CONTRIBUTORS | SGT. MARK BROWN | STAFF SGT. JILL JAMGOCHIAN | TECH SGT. ROBIN MEREDITH | CAPT. AL BOSCO | PFC. DARRIEL SWATTS |



Staff Sgt. Sylvia Garcia and Paul Wivert, Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems mechanic with the 146th Aerial Port Squadron control the compressor to push air through a loading hose to force the fire retardant through and into the MAFFS on a C-130 aircraft supporting the 302nd MAFFS retardant reload operations



Assigned to Joint Task Force Sentinel, Staff Sgt. Kyle Deckard and Sgt. Mike Moore, Task Force Mather UH-60 Black Hawk mechanics, use a control and display unit (CADU) to perform a main rotor track and balance procedure. The procedure is vital to ensuring the main rotor blades operate level with one another while the aircraft is flying.



Spc. Keith Abara unrolls the 'oversize load' banner that goes across the front of the M916 A1 truck at the armory located in Red Bluff, Calif.



Members of Team Dozer take a moment to pose for a picture before conveying to the fire camp located at Anderson Fairgrounds in Anderson, Calif.



# OPERATION READY FAMILIES PROGRAM

[WWW.CALGUARD.CA.GOV/READYFAMILIES](http://WWW.CALGUARD.CA.GOV/READYFAMILIES)



**Purpose:** To assist commanders as they support the families and loved ones of the Soldiers and Airmen during times of peace, training, and deployment.

**Vision:** A fully functioning military chain of command working with a fully functioning Community of Concern to enhance the readiness and wellness of the California National Guard.

The Program provides assistance to Family Readiness Groups (FRG) as they establish or enhance their operations, trains FRG volunteers, builds partnerships to benefit our Child and Youth, and through a network of Family Assistance Specialists, provides 24/7 help to not

only families of the California National Guard but to families from all the other services. We work with units to provide extensive Predeployment and Postdeployment briefings and webinars to ensure Guardmembers and families have important information. Operation Ready Families Program has direct partnerships with Military One Source, Military Family Life Consultants on Demand, American Red Cross, Military Child Education Coalition, and Operation Military Kids to better serve the needs of our California National Guard Community of Concern. We also partner with our state Chaplain's office to provide Marriage Enrichment Seminars for couples who have experience separation because of a deployment.

## Points of Contact

For Operation Ready Families, Family Assistance, TAA, MOS, and/or American Red Cross:

### Phillip Garcia

(916) 417-2852 email: [phillip.garcia1@us.army.mil](mailto:phillip.garcia1@us.army.mil)

### Erika Wada

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For Child and Youth Programs, MFLC, and OMK:

### Becky Mcphetridge

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## WELLNESS WEBINAR BRIEFINGS

Operation Ready Families is offering Webinars designed to inform you of your benefits during deployment. A Webinar allows you to attend these briefings from the comfort of your own home - just register and follow the log-in instructions on the day of your selected Webinar! To register, go to the links provided below or to

[WWW.CALGUARD.CA.GOV/READYFAMILIES](http://WWW.CALGUARD.CA.GOV/READYFAMILIES)

Thursday, 7 August 2008 - 7:30pm

### A Guide for Service Members: Homecoming and Communication Presented by the CA JFSAP Military Family Life Consultants

Issues related to spouses, girlfriends, boyfriends, children, parents and extended family will be addressed such as marital problems, problems with the kids, birth of a baby. You will also receive tools on how to communicate your expectations for your big homecoming day.

Registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/333089246>

Thursday, 14 August 2008 - 7:30pm

### Financial Assistance Programs

**Requirements** and application processes for the California National Guard Financial Assistance Funds, including the California Military Family Relief Fund and California National Guard Financial Assistance Fund, will be reviewed.

Registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/815915131>

Thursday, 21 August 2008 - 7:30pm

### A Guide for Loved Ones: Homecoming - Managing Expectations Presented by the CA JFSAP Military Family Life Consultants

This course is designed to help family members and loved ones with their service members' home-coming. From the moment you get the news to the months after they return we will help guide you through this emotional time. We touch on issues such as relaying your expectations and

concerns to listening to theirs. Areas such as how to involve the children, what to do about extended family, how to please everybody, and the signs and symptoms of PTSD are explored. You will also be given a list of available resources for the State of California and instruction on how to set up free counseling (if needed) for you and your family. Questions are encouraged and will be answered during the course.

Registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/759806471>

Thursday, 28 August 2008 - 7:30pm

### Child and Youth Programs

New and exciting things are coming for the children and teens of the California National Guard! Get your children involved through various new programs and offers. Learn about them today through this Webinar.

Registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/222218402>

Thursday, 4 September 2008 - 7:30pm

### Red Cross and Military One Source

U.S. military families rely on the American Red Cross to relay emergency messages between U.S. troops and their families. Emergency communications, counseling and emergency financial assistance are just some of the assistance provided to U.S. military families everyday by American Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Services.

Military One Source is there for military personnel and their families... 24/7/365! This Webinar will provide information on Military One Source and all that it can provide for you and your family.

Registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/490700997>

Thursday, 11 September 2008 - 7:30pm

### Tricare

Overview of your medical benefits through Tricare, including important new information that may be relevant to you and your family.

Registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/159105485>

Thursday, 18 September 2008 - 7:30pm

### Marriage Enrichment Seminar Overview

The purpose of the seminars is to coach married couples on how to communicate effectively, work as a team to solve problems, manage conflicts without damaging closeness, and preserve and enhance love, commitment, and friendship. This overview will cover requirements and a summary of the course.

Registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/494091708>

Thursday, 25 September 2008 - 7:30pm

### Family Readiness Assistant (FRA) and Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA) Programs

The FRA coordinates all aspects of the family readiness triad: Family Readiness Groups, Rear Detachment Command and Family Assistance Centers. Find out what they can do for you.

Registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/311955443>



# CREW CHIEFS

## GET HANDS DIRTY

BY SENIOR AIRMAN PAUL DUQUETTE

Staff Sgt. Skyler Swinhart, 163rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Crew Chief, recovers an MQ-1 Predator at Kandahar International Airport, in Afghanistan.

Crew chiefs expect to get their hands dirty - some say you're not doing your job if they're not. But for our transitioning crew chiefs, getting your hands dirty is not something they can do at home station.

Deploying to the area of responsibility (AOR) wasn't something 163rd Aircraft Maintenance crew chiefs did often when the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing had the tanker mission, but since the transition to the Predator, it's slowly becoming the norm.

Before deploying to the AOR all maintenance personnel go through Expeditionary Combat Skills Training (ECST) and one month of hands-on training at Creech Air Force Base, Nev.

During the three-day ECST course, they learn what to expect in the AOR; basic challenge commands, perform gate guard duty; identify improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnates; local AOR cultural concerns; high and low crawl methods; crowd control techniques and the main focus of the training, use of force.

After completing ECST, they move on to their hands-on or "spin-up training". This portion of the training takes each member to their respective shop, allowing them to perform their job under a supervisor or some cases, depending on their skill, supervise others doing their jobs.

Once they've completed their ECST and spin-up training, they deploy to the AOR via military transportation.

"It was hard, we worked 12-hour shifts, six days a week and sometimes I came in on my days off," said 163rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Crew Chief Staff Sgt. Skyler Swinhart, "But being new to the Predator, it was a great experience, because I was able to thoroughly learn my job and know I was actually a part of Operation Enduring Freedom. It was very satisfying when I realized I was actually helping the Soldiers in the field."

"Though it was hard at times, I want to go back again," said Staff Sgt. Swinhart. "One thing that made it easier was the flow of communication from back home. My wife would send me care packages filled with candy and snack foods. We also communicated via email. My son learned to

crawl while I was in theater, but I got to see it because my wife sent me pictures."

"The living accommodations definitely made the time away from family, friends and my fiancé easier," said 163rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Crew Chief Staff Sgt. Michael Astolfo, "We were staying four to a room in hard billets. The rooms had air conditioning and optional internet hook-up."

"The combination of a microphone, web camera and internet service gave me the ability to talk to my fiancé state-side," said Staff Sgt. Astolfo, "It was really uplifting when we'd come in to work to find a care package from home."



Senior Airman Eric Hurley, a MQ-1 Predator avionics specialist, assigned to the 163rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron March Air Reserve Base, Calif., conducts an electronic maintenance inspection on the MQ-1 Predator utilizing a single bay station July 10, 2008 Creech Air Force Base, Nev. Senior Airman Hurley is one of three reservists from March here on temporary duty to receive a month long of training alongside there active duty counterparts before deploying to Southwest Asia.



Staff Sgt. Shaun Johnson (background), a MQ-1 Predator crew chief and Senior Airman Eric Hurley, a MQ-1 Predator avionics specialist, both assigned to the 163rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron March Air Reserve Base, Calif., inspects the cover of the sensor on a MQ-1 Predator



A convoy of M916 A1 Trucks haul eight D7 Dozers to the Fire Camp held at Anderson Fairgrounds in Anderson, Calif.



# TEAM DOZER

STORY AND PHOTO BY PRIVATE FIRST CLASS DARRIEL SWATTS

National Guard Soldiers from 11 states have deployed to Northern California to assist in firefighting efforts as Operation Lightning Strikes firefighting operations continue after lighting storms in late June sparked hundreds of fires throughout the state.

Team Dozer, one of the first responding ground elements, consisting of eight trucks and trailers, eight retrofitted bulldozers, and thirty-two Soldiers deployed to assist in firefighting efforts. The team is a component of the 579th Engineer Company from Red Bluff, Calif.

"With one bulldozer I can clear about 150 men's worth of work," said Staff Sgt. Larry Enos, California National Guard.

The dozers are going to create 'fire breaks,' a protective line through an area, removing all combustible material and creating a barrier of dirt so the fire has nothing to burn and cannot continue to spread.

"It would take a lot of man hours to do what a dozer can do in a fraction of the time," said Chief Warrant Officer Ronald Spliethof, a field maintenance officer.

The dozers are receiving improvements like roll cages to protect Soldiers in case the dozer should turn over in the hazardous terrain, and fire curtains to help shield the operator from the heat and flying embers caused by the fires.

"It makes me feel good. It is one of the reasons I joined the National

Guard," said Enos. "I wanted to help my community and be a productive member of society."

It is the first time the 579th has been tasked with fighting the fires, instead of solely handling troop transportation during a natural disaster.

"With a large number of active fires currently burning, Citizen Soldiers from all over California have been called upon to provide assistance to a multi-agency fire fighting force," said Col. David Nickels, Task Force 115th commander.

Every Soldier at the Red Bluff Armory is excited to take part in the mission, said Enos.

The Soldiers set up camp in Red Bluff to prepare themselves and

their equipment for upcoming missions. Soldiers go through several steps to become battle ready. They have added new safety equipment to help shield them from intense heat and possible flaming debris.

The Soldiers received new fire retardant uniforms to help keep them safe in a hazardous situation. Soldiers also received training on how to operate the dozers for firefighting missions and underwent physicals to ensure their bodies can handle the rigorous demands which will be placed upon them.

# SOLDIERS GIVE BACK TO COMMUNITY

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS DAVID COSS

On a warm Saturday morning in June, select members of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade participated in a highway clean up as part of the CALTRANS Adopt-A-Highway program. 25 Soldiers donned vests, helmets, and gloves then loaded up with large trash bags to clean a two mile section of Highway 168 in the City of Clovis, Calif.

Working diligently and quickly they managed to fill six large bags of trash and debris from their adopted section of highway which runs from Temperance Avenue to Herndon Avenue on Westbound State Highway 168 in Fresno County. This section of highway is a major artery to the Sierra National Forest, and Shaver Lake which

accounts for the large volumes of trash that accumulate on the highway.

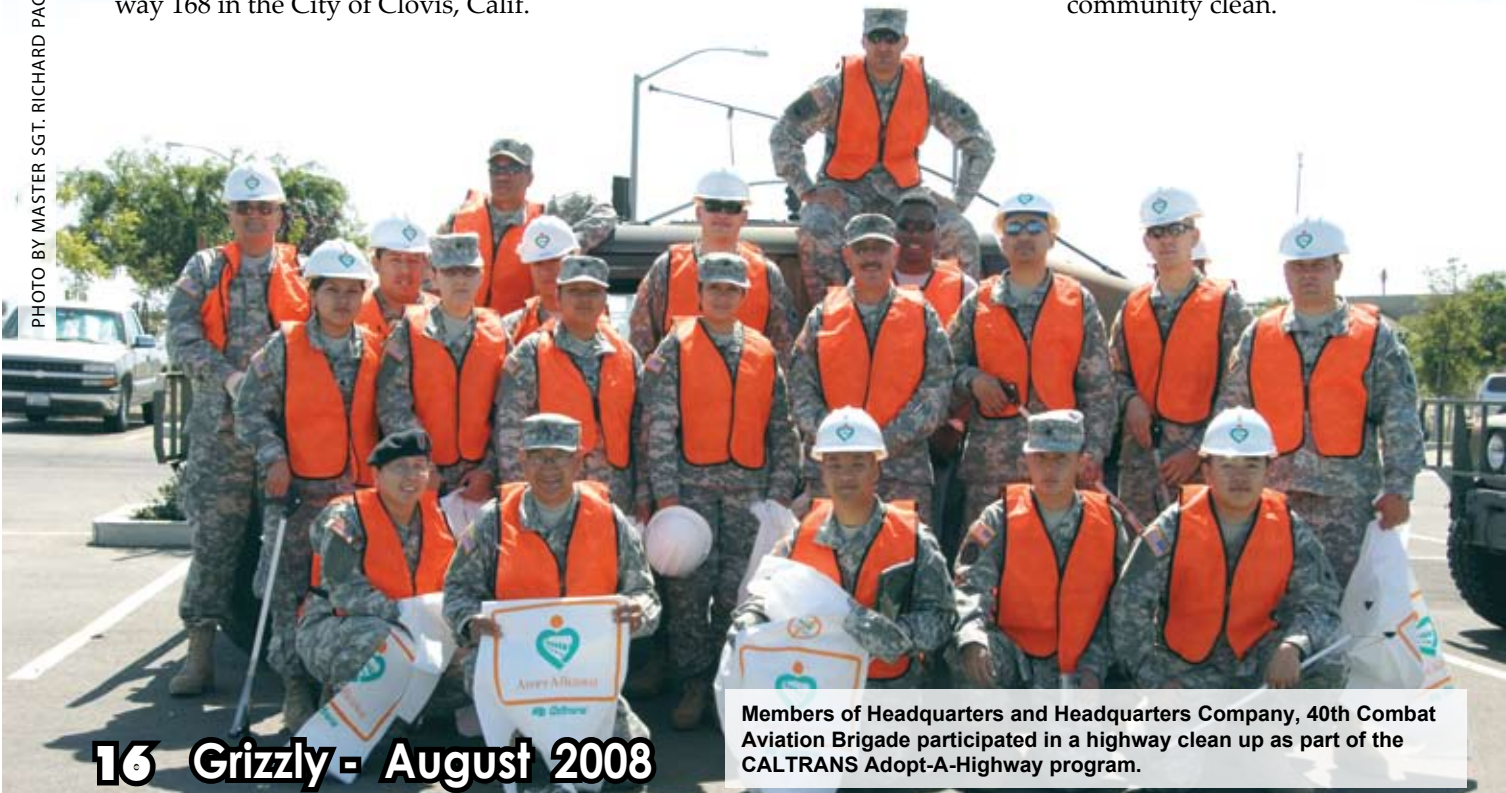
In return for their actions, CALTRANS has placed a sign on their highway indicating to everyone that the California Army National Guard, and the HHC, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade is committed to keeping the community clean.

"The goal of the National Guard is to provide service to our Community, State and Nation. What better way to give back than to provide a form of community service? At first I was nervous about this, and unsure if the Soldiers would think it was a punishment, but by the time we were finished you could see the looks of pride on their faces. Some actually scrambled for their cell phones to take pictures of "their" sign. It was a phenomenal feeling." Said 1st Sgt. Rodolfo Garza Jr., the HHC First Sergeant,

The Soldiers were greeted by cheers and honks from local residents, and one person even made a point to stop and provide a Starbucks gift card to 1st Sgt. Garza. He stated that he felt honored to see Soldiers out working, and wanted to give a little something back for their efforts. Each Soldier received a cup of their favorite drink courtesy of this citizen.

After two hours, the highway was sparkling clean, everyone felt pride in their accomplishments, and a couple of Soldiers even walked away with cash and a Bluetooth headset.

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. RICHARD PACK



Members of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade participated in a highway clean up as part of the CALTRANS Adopt-A-Highway program.





Staff Sergeant Aaron Ballew conducts a thorough inspection of a UH-60 Blackhawk at Mather Field, Calif. Staff Sgt Ballew inspects all mechanical work and has to give the final approving signature in order for the helicopter to be released for duty

## MECHANICS UNSUNG, HEROES

STORY AND PHOTO BY PFC. DARRIEL SWATTS

Who are the ones who keep the pilots up in the air fighting fires? They are the unsung heroes of Operation Lightning Strike, the aircraft mechanics. If was not for them the helicopters would not be in the air and the ground crews would be overwhelmed by the wild fires. These mechanics work every day, 12 hour shifts.

"We work both scheduled and unscheduled jobs... We'll support them 24/7 if necessary," stated Chief Warrant Officer Tom Greil of the 185th Theater Aviation Company.

The mechanics at Mather Field, Calif. do everything from changing the rotary blades, to engine work, to giving the helicopter a much needed bath. "We have spare helicopters available; so, should one come in broken or not working, we can get another one out immediately and keep fighting the fires," said Greil.

However, when an aircraft comes in broken, it is fixed and rushed back out; but, quality work is not sacrificed. Soldiers like Staff Sgt. Aaron Ballew act as quality control for all repairs. Every helicopter that has been fixed has to pass under his watchful eyes, Staff Sgt Ballew determines whether the helicopter passes, and gets set back out, or fails, and the work has to be redone. "I just go over it one last time before we actually put it back out on the line" stated Staff Sgt Ballew of the 1106th Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot (AVCRAD.)

So when all is said and done, the mechanics are just one of the many vital parts of Operation Lightning Strike. They take care of the helicopters and make sure everyone can do their job safely, all the way down to the people fighting the fires on the ground.

## AIR NATIONAL GUARD UNIT READY TO FIGHT WILDFIRES AND SAVE LIVES

BY CAPT. ALYSON M. TEETER

Crews from the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard, were certified to perform water bucket operations here July 2, becoming the only rescue unit in the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard qualified to fight fires.

The certification is timely as it coincides with an early start to the fire season in Northern California, which is where the 129th RQW is based.

The aircrews and Pave Hawks have been on temporary duty here in support of Operation Lightning Strike – the California National Guard's firefighting support mission. While the equipment modifications and required training were being accomplished, the unit has maintained a continuous alert posture for search and rescue and high risk medical evacuations.

The 129th Rescue Wing is the lead wing for HH-60G Pave Hawk water bucket certification efforts, according to Lt. Col. Steve Butow, 129th Operations Group Director. The training, equipment modifications, and certification process will lay the groundwork for other combat search and rescue wings to obtain water bucket certification.

"Joint firefighting operations are analogous to the joint combat search and rescue operating environment our crews will experience in the Global War on Terror," said Lt. Col. Daniel Lapostole, 129th Rescue Squadron Commander. "The training value is unmatched."

The training the aircrews received is in accordance with the California Interagency Military Helicopter Firefighting Program and was provided by certified CAL FIRE instructors.

"Operation of the water bucket can be quickly learned by operators with no prior experience," said Maj. Matt Thomas, 129th Rescue Squadron Director of Operations. The crew and aircraft are now certified to utilize the 660 gallon capacity water bucket. The bucket is rigged for use with the cargo hook, and water is released via a contact "pickle" switch.

Once the crew receives their orders to perform fire duty, maintainers must remove the internal auxiliary tank, install a radio and release switches, and then paint the aircraft with required markings. The water bucket is attached once on scene. Simultaneously, the crews maintain airborne SAR alert.

The HH-60Gs also have an aerial refueling capability that allows Airmen to perform longer rescue and firefighting support missions. The aerial refueling is accomplished by the 129th RQW's MC-130P Combat Shadow tankers.

"Airmen from the 129th are motivated and ready to assist their neighbors in fighting the fires here in California," said Col. Amos Bagdasarian, 129th Rescue Wing Commander. "Our search and rescue mission, coupled with the fire bucket certification, adds to the state's broad range of fire fighting capabilities."

The 129th Rescue Wing is located in the heart of the Silicon Valley, the 129th Rescue Wing's mission is to train and prepare to perform its wartime mission of combat search and rescue anywhere in the world. Equipped with MC-130P Combat Shadow tankers, HH-60G Pave Hawk rescue helicopters, and the Guardian Angel weapon system, the 129th has performed a wide variety of civilian search and rescue missions, including distressed persons aboard ships, lost or injured hikers, and medical evacuations. More information is available at [www.129rqw.ang.af.mil](http://www.129rqw.ang.af.mil).



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BARBARA APKARIAN

An HH-60G Pave Hawk from the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard, releases water from an attached bucket near Sacramento, Calif. July 2. The aircrews were training with water buckets, becoming the only crews certified for firefighting suppression duty in the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard.



PHOTO BY SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA



## BY CAPT. KIMBERLY HOLMAN MENDED WINGS

"You'll never be able to fly again."

That's what doctors told UH-1 pilot 1st Lt. Christina Douglas when she broke her back less than a year and a half ago.

On Jan. 2, 2007, her UH-1 crashed into a mountainside while flying a routine mission with Operation Jumpstart supporting the Border Patrol. Miraculously all nine people and the K-9 onboard survived.

But Lt. Douglas was hurt, and she knew it. "I knew immediately after we hit the ground that my back was broken. I felt a tingling in my lower back, and it felt very unstable."

During eight hours of surgery doctors performed a spinal fusion and placed titanium rods and screws in her back.

For two months she couldn't move at all and remained flat on her back. The third month she

began to move around a bit, and by the fourth month, to everyone's amazement, she was back at work performing light duty.

"I knew after 12 weeks when I could sit up and started moving around that I'd be fine," said Douglas.

And one year after the accident she ran a half marathon.

"I never believed what the doctors told me," she said.

She continued to pursue a waiver which would allow her to return to flight status. And again, to everyone's amazement, for the first time in history, the U.S. Army granted flight status to an aircrew member with a spinal fusion.

On June 10, 1st Lt. Christina Douglas climbed back into the right seat of a UH-1 and read the checklists for her crew, returning gracefully to her duties as co-pi-

lot. She was at the controls as they flew the exact flight path she had flown just 16 months earlier, out above the San Diego harbor, down the Coronado coastline toward the U.S./Mexico border, and then east toward Otay mountain where the crash had occurred.

"I circled above the crash site.... way above the crash site," recalled Douglas. "It was very strange being there again, seeing it from that perspective. It brought back a lot of memories."

She said she felt very nervous, excited, and yet somehow relieved. It had been such a long time.

Douglas spent many hours prior to the flight back in the books, making sure she knew all of the emergency procedures and systems limitations by heart. She is scheduled to begin training on the UH-60 soon as the UH-1s she has been flying are being gradually phased out of the National Guard.

"There's a sense of closure for me now. I flew in the same type aircraft with Operation Jumpstart, and I flew right along the same route at about the same time of day that we crashed," said Douglas. "Now I have a sense of relief, and I feel content."

The road to earning one's wings in the U.S. military is long and challenging. Many aspiring aviators will attempt and only a few will succeed. Being told you will never again fly is for most aviators unbearably painful.

This young woman saw a different forecast for her life than her doctors did, and chose to fight to fly again. She wears the wings she earned proudly on her chest. Her bravery in the face of a long and painful road to recovery have revealed an honorable young Soldier with a promising career as a pilot before her.

1st Lt. Christina Douglas, UH-1 pilot, and fellow crewmember Staff Sgt. Toby Mack, crew chief, prepare for Douglas' first flight 17 months after breaking her back in a UH-1 crash that took place Jan. 3, 2007. Mack and Douglas were both aboard the UH-1 that crashed.



PHOTO BY SGT. KENNETH BINCE



# MUD RUN: GRIZZLIES TAKE FIRST

BY SENIOR AIRMAN PAUL DUQUETTE

June 14 marked a day of victory for the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing's teams, who sweep the boots and utilities category at the World Famous Camp Pendleton Mud Run 2008.

The wing fielded nine teams, bringing out more than 30 members. They took first and second places in two of the three categories they competed in.

For the 4th year running, the Dirty Bears won first place in their category. Their team consisted of Maj. Brenda Hendricksen and Heidi Gibson, Senior Master Sgt. Tyler Hessheimer, Tech. Sgt. Karen Jackson and Airman SharLee Dodge.

Placing first place in the Mens Boots and Utilities military category was the Bears-N-Dirt. The team consisted of Capt. John Gunty, Master Sgts. Matt Simpson, Nathan Brown, Peter Kelly and Tech. Sgt. Chad Pearce.

"The presence of fun, excitement and competition was felt as early as 6 a.m.," said 163d Public Affairs Photographer Tech. Sgt. Julie Avey, "which was three hours earlier than the 9 a.m. start time. The air was full of team spirit, everyone excited about the obstacles to come."

Some of the obstacles wing members face during the 6.2 mile course was a tire obstacle, steeple jump from two-foot high wall with a small mud pit, low sand crawl, river crossings, Suicide Hill (18 percent grade hill), hay bales, climbing walls, tunnels, slippery hill and a final mud pit at the end.

During the time just before the race some of the new runners were nervously deciding what to eat to give them a "boost", veteran runners were reading and catching up on the latest news with fellow teammates and not so serious runners were stretching with silly moves.

"I never ran in a race like this before," said first time runner Staff Sgt. Theresa Kadis, "I was very worried about the 18 percent grade hill that my teammates told me about before the race. But overall I had fun. It brought back memories of basic military training when I dunked my head in the water while low crawling under the wires. I was relieved when I finished the race, but I'm very excited to come back in October and do it all over again"

Sergeant Kadis was part of an all-Operations Group team named Gnomads. Fellow teammates were Tech. Sgt. Ann Cryderman, Capt. Amanda Herrington, Staff Sgt. James Moat and Maj. James Summers.

"After you run it once, you learn the course and the techniques to maneuver through the muddy paths. The sea of people in the middle of the muck in the beginning of the race really slows you

First time runner Staff Sgt. Juliet Saunders stretches before the 2008 Camp Pendleton Mud Run.



down," said Tech. Sgt. Ray Linares, "If I do it next year, I'm going to push to the front at the beginning of the race in order to separate from the crowds."

PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. JULIE AVEY

## AIRMAN STRIVES TO BEAT WORLD RECORD IN RUN

BY 1ST LT. THERESA M. CHRYSTAL



A 22-year-old Airman plans to break a world record in his quest to complete a Trans-American run beginning November 4 – his 23rd birthday.

Senior Airman Tim Villarreal, a California Air National Guardsman, is striving to run cross country from Langley Air Force Base, Va., back to his home unit, the 144th Fighter Wing in Fresno in just 45 days, making himself the fastest person to do so.

According to the Guinness Book of Records, the current record is 46 days, 8 hours, and 36 minutes set by then 28-year-old Frank Gianino in October of 1980 when he ran 3,103.5 miles from San Francisco to New York City.

Although Villarreal's "Run for Hope Across America" is fewer miles – 2,979 – if he reaches his goal, it would still be considered the fastest time for a Trans-American run according to Guinness.

The journey, however, is not purely a selfish gesture the young Airman is embarking on. His goal is to raise \$100,000 which will all be donated to the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

"I chose my birthday to begin this race because instead of just getting gifts, I want to give something back," said Villarreal.

Joy Vdzurovcik, an Event Marketing Representative at St. Jude's, is very excited and supportive of Airman Villarreal's record-breaking attempt.

"I think that what Tim is doing is truly amazing and shows great strength in character and a deeper understanding of what the patients at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital go through every day," she said. "Many people run simply to stay healthy, but when you run with a greater purpose, you really get so much more out of what you put into it. And this is something that Tim Villarreal really understands."

Although he wouldn't disclose the personal reasons for wanting

to do this run, he did say it was a promise he made to someone that sparked the idea. Since 2005, the thought was in the back of his mind, but it wasn't until a few months ago that it finally hit him.

In June 2007, Airman Villarreal was selected to be a member of the Air Force track and field national team. He qualified to participate in the mile in Munich Germany to qualify for the 2008 Olympic Trials in Eugene, Ore.

He had his ticket in hand and was ready to go when his vehicle was broken into. His birth certificate and social security card were both stolen, so he had no documentation to get his passport. Since he couldn't get a passport, he was told he wouldn't be able to go with the team.

"It's important for me to do this, because I grew hopeless after missing the Olympics," said Villarreal. "I want people to know that anybody can be a somebody and even in hard times, you can overcome adversity."

According to his research, Airman Villarreal believes he will also be the first military member to cross the United States by foot. If not, he hopes his exposure will help him find any other servicemember who has accomplished this feat and challenge

him or her to beat his record.

In order to break the current record, Villarreal plans to run 67 miles a day for the first 40 days and then 68 to 69 miles for the last 5 days. His schedule will begin at 4:00 a.m., running 14-mile intervals and resting 2 hours in between.

With only \$500 of his \$100,000 goal raised, he's not going to be deterred. He knows he's got his work cut out for him, but he believes people will know a good cause when they see one. He plans to show them just how one person can make a difference as he runs his way across America.

Clawson Honda of Fresno, Fluid sports drink and Digipro - who will be providing footage of the journey - have all sponsored Villarreal in his quest. Visit his Web site, [www.timacrossamerica.com](http://www.timacrossamerica.com) for more information and to track his progress as he prepares for his coast-to-coast trek.

"We are proud to support Tim in his quest to set a new record," said Lt. Col. Larry McKoane from the 194th Fighter Squadron in Fresno and the owner of Clawson Honda. "This is a very worthwhile cause, and we're happy to help him reach these lofty goals."



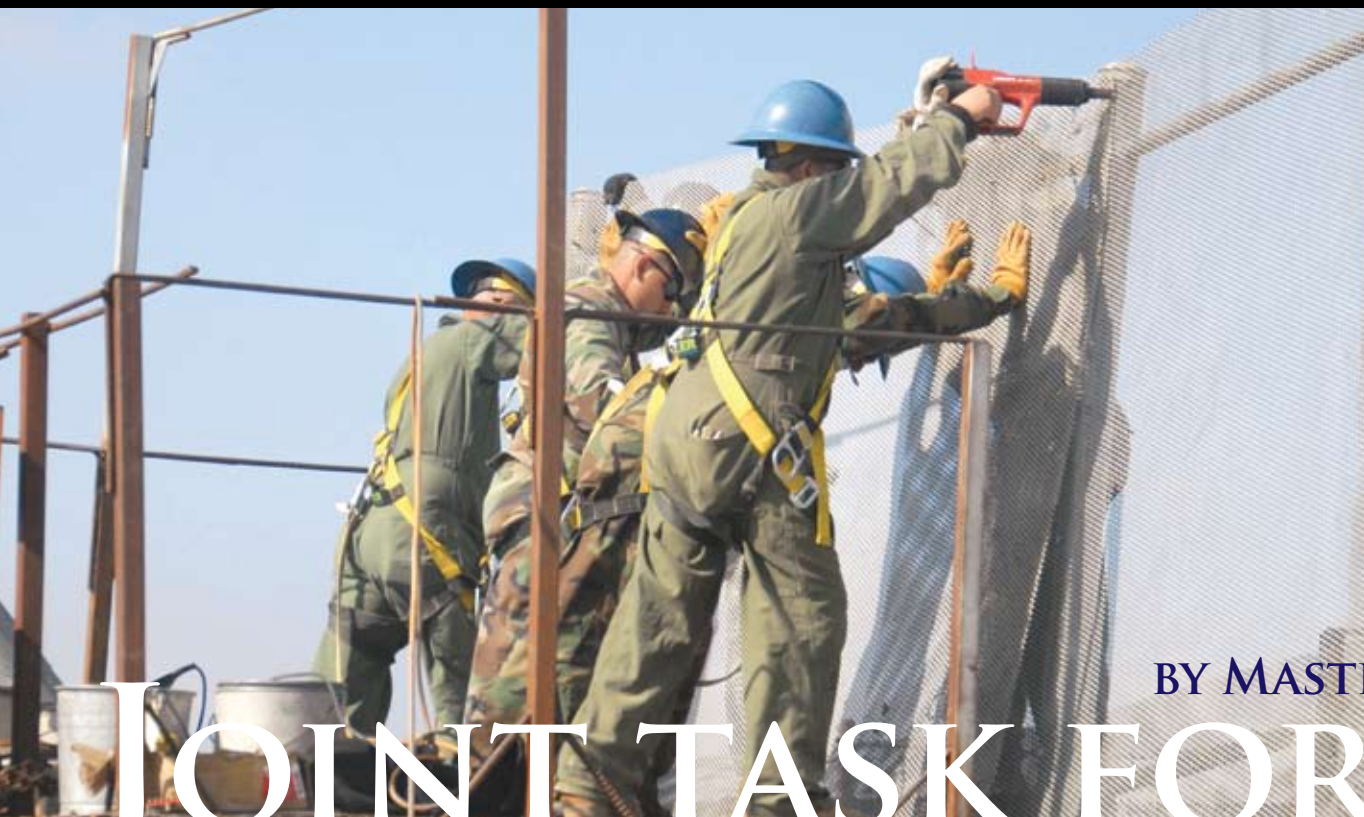


PHOTO BY SGT. KENNETH BINCE

A fence crew from Task Force Steel Castle installs the final panel of secondary fence during the final days of Operation Jump Start in California. During the two-year mission National Guard engineers retrofitted 20,000 feet of secondary fence to a 16' foot vertical height, rehabbed over 35 miles of road, installed numerous drainage projects and low-water crossings, put up camera and lighting towers, constructed two "King Kong" gates and moved over 280,000 cubic feet of earth to improve border infrastructure.

BY MASTER SGT. MICHAEL DRAKE

# JOINT TASK FORCE VISTA

## CONCLUDES TWO YEARS OF SUPPORT TO BORDER PATROL

After two years of maintaining vigilant watch from remote mountain tops and canyons; operating remote-controlled cameras placed strategically along the border; servicing and repairing vehicles, building fences and drainage projects; repairing border roads and performing other supplemental duties for the U.S. Border Patrol, OPERATION JUMP START in California is coming to an end. Yet, while the various task forces in California demobilize and Guardsmen out-process and return to their civil-

ian jobs or deploy to new assignments, various political leaders continue to call for the Guard to remain on the border.

On May 15, 2006, President Bush called upon southwest border governors to utilize National Guard troops to provide support to the U.S. Customs & Border Protection. The objective outlined by the president was to "gain and maintain operational control of the U.S. southern border." Operations would include,

"operating surveillance systems, analyzing intelligence, installing fences and vehicle barriers, building patrol roads and providing training." The Guard would supplement the Border Patrol as it recruited, trained and deployed an additional 6,000 agents, taking on supplemental duties in order to redeploy more badged agents to their primary law enforcement duties.

Governor Schwarzenegger authorized the California National Guard

to deploy on the Southwest Border Mission and Joint Task Force VISTA (JTFV) was formed. By August 1, more than 1,000 Soldiers and Airmen had reported for duty to begin training and receive assignments. Over the next two years, 2700 California National Guardsmen would serve in a wide range of duties, some working alongside badged agents, others in support operations in the effort to secure the border.

## TASK FORCES

Task Force San Diego and Task Force El Centro provided technical and tactical assistance along the international border starting at the Pacific running 66 miles inland, and from the mountains across the flat desert expanse. Guardsmen served as entry identification teams, remote video surveillance system operators, intelligence analysts, firearms instructors, heavy equipment operators and vehicle mechanics.

Task Force Wily flew surveillance missions in OH-58 observation helicopters and transported Border Patrol agents to remote and inaccessible areas for nighttime operations aboard UH-1 and UH-60 helicopters fulfilling up to 68 percent of Border Patrol air mobility unit requirements.

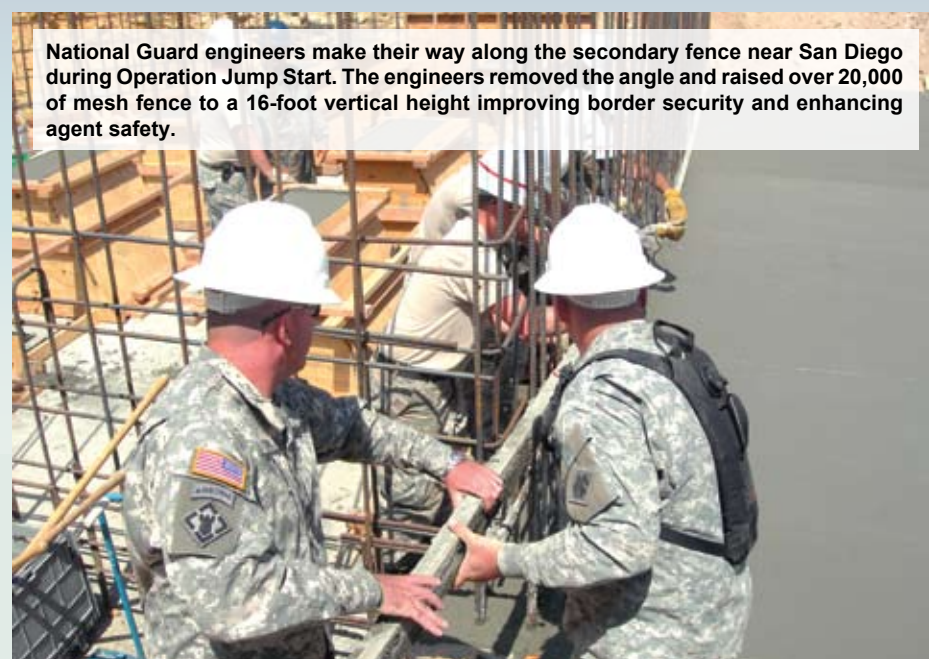
Together these three task forces were responsible for nearly 164,000 apprehensions and turn-backs of illegal border crossers, drug smugglers and human traffickers. They were also responsible for the seizure of over 40,000 pounds of narcotics as well as 680 pounds of cocaine. Guard mechanics increased vehicle operational rates into the 90 percent range, frequently turning around Border Patrol vehicles in hours rather than days or even weeks.

Engineers with Task Force Steel Castle, working with other rotational Guard units from around the country, built and repaired 35 miles of border

roads, constructed numerous drainage projects and two "King Kong" gates. They fabricated and placed nearly 1,000 Normandy-style barriers in desert regions to cut off the high-speed access across the flat terrain favored by smugglers. They installed camera and lighting towers and ran over 58,000 feet of wiring. They retrofitted over 20,000 feet of secondary fence to a vertical height of 16 feet. They also literally moved mountains to improve border infrastructure, in one instance moving 250,000 cubic yards of earth at Russian Hill transforming a near vertical cliff into 10-percent grade where the secondary fence and border road will extend westward, eventually to the Pacific.

Task Force Phoenix saw to the medical needs of Guardsmen with 5580 sick call visits, 1300 physicals and 7065 immunizations, and satisfying other training requirements such as certifying 1083 Soldiers and Airmen in Combat Lifesaver Training. Their personnel operated from medical facilities in San Diego and El Centro, as well as at numerous field sites such as ranges and engineering work sites.

Personnel in the headquarters company saw to the administrative needs of task force personnel such as orders and pay and travel vouchers, processing awards and decorations, and completing required annual NCO evaluations.



National Guard engineers make their way along the secondary fence near San Diego during Operation Jump Start. The engineers removed the angle and raised over 20,000 of mesh fence to a 16-foot vertical height improving border security and enhancing agent safety.

PHOTO BY SGT. KENNETH BINCE



During Operation Jump Start National Guard engineers improved operational rates for U.S. Border Patrol vehicles from the 40 percent range into the 90 percent range. Here a National Guardsman performs regular maintenance on a U.S. Customs and Border Protection vehicle in the El Centro sector.

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. MICHAEL DRAKE





California National Guardsmen load Normandy-style barriers made of recycled railroad track for placement in the El Centro sector as part of Operation Jump Start – the SW Border Mission. The barriers cut off the high speed vehicle access across the flat desert regions formerly favored by smugglers and human traffickers.

PHOTO BY SGT. KENNETH BINCE

## NATIONAL VISIBILITY

Media, both print and broadcast from across California and a dozen international outlets, filed hundreds of stories on the National Guard border mission. Initial fears and misconceptions of a military deployment to the border were soon replaced with images of Guardsmen working in support roles. NBC Nightly News, CNN, Fox NewsChannel, TIME Magazine, Associated Press, and even National Geographic provided national coverage, with CNN and Fox reporting live via satellite on multiple occasions from the border. Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the Adjutant General, was a regular and frequent visitor, reviewing operations and chatting with Guardsmen positioned from the cliffs overlooking the Pacific to the skyboxes at Andrade Grade just outside Yuma, Ariz. Other political and military leaders who toured the border, without exception, praised the dedication, professionalism and accomplishments of the California Guard and its contributions in helping secure the border

Lt. Gen. Steven Blum, Chief of National Guard Bureau said the mission was an “outstanding combination of the National Guard and the United States Border Patrol working together to make our nation safer.”

Dr. Steven Bucci, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense said the Guard was critical to the mission and “has done a fantastic job.”

The commissioner for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, W. Ralph Basham, applauded the California Guard saying, “California has it right,” and should serve as the example for the other states. He said the California Guard has “made a significant difference in bringing down the number of attempts of illegal aliens trying to get across the border.”

Many Guardsmen expressed satisfaction in serving on a mission of homeland security on American soil and were hopeful OPERATION JUMP START would continue beyond the designated two years. However, a final sense of closure was realized with the end-of-mission ceremony June 12. Under blue skies with Navy jets operating overhead, the remaining elements of Joint Task Force VISTA formed up at Heritage Park, just steps from the beach, on Coronado Island. Three task forces within TF VISTA furled and cased their colors for the final time.

Visiting dignitaries included previous JTF commanders, Col. Nate Reddicks; Col. Barbara Nuismer; and Brig. Gen. Kevin Ellsworth, who established the task force; as well as representatives of the various Naval installations in San Diego. Senior leadership from San Diego, El Centro and Yuma sectors were also present to bid farewell to the Guardsmen who have improved border security, to thank them for their service, and cite the number of Guardsmen who have joined the ranks of the Border Patrol in their respective sectors.

“All of you brought selfless commitment and your very best effort to this mission,” said General Ellsworth. He expressed his profound pride of what the task force had accomplished, exceeding everybody’s initial expectations, and calling its members “true heroes.”

Chief Patrol Agent for San Diego Sector, Michael Fisher, said the impression Guardsmen made upon young Border Patrol agents “professionally doing your duty, doing your mission, keeping focused” had helped him as chief in developing and building a new culture within his own organization.

Chief Patrol Agent in El Centro, Jeffrey Calhoon, said bringing National Guard troops to the border “had a major impact on cross-border traffic...with a 26 percent reduction in cross border traffic, and a 90 percent reduction in narcotics traffic in the Calexico station.” He called those reductions historical, and not likely to be seen in the rest of his career. “You literally put us years ahead of our plans,” he said. “And that has residual and long term consequences.”

David Knudsen, the Assistant Cabinet Secretary and Governor Schwarzenegger’s representative at the ceremony said the National Guard “answered the call with courage, determination and with great success – as they always do,” reinforcing the maxim: The National Guard: Always Ready – Always There.



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. MICHAEL DRAKE

A California National Guardsman scans the countryside watching for illegal border crossers, smuggles and other suspicious activity along the border during Operation Jump Start. In California, Entry Identification Teams and Guardsmen working Border Patrol remote-controlled cameras were responsible for the apprehension by Border Patrol agents or the turn-back south of nearly 164,000 illegal border crossers.



# WHAT EVERY RESERVIST SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THEIR EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

BY COL. (SMR) JERROLD L. JURIN

Your job is protected. As a uniformed service member, you have rights under the Uniformed Series Employments & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

**Your Rights.** Your employers or agency must give you a military leave of absence and give you prompt reinstatement at the completion of your tour of duty. You will continue accumulation of seniority while you are on active duty. You are entitled to prompt reinstatement of your health insurance upon your return to work without having to wait for an open season. If your employer has new requirements for your position, they must provide training. You are protected against discrimination because of your participation the armed services.

**Your Requirements.** Give as much prior notice as possible to your employer about your pending mobilization. Don't wait until the last minute as your employer will most likely need to hire someone to fill your positions while you are away. If you think you might have a problem with your employer it is better to find out early on rather than wait until your return from deployment. You must serve under honorable conditions during your deployment.

## Reemployment timetable.

1-30 days of service – Report next scheduled work day after eight hours rest.

30-180 days of service – Apply within 14 days after completion of service.

181 + days of service – Apply within 90 days after completion of service.

For those serving in support of Operation Iraq Freedom or Operation Afghanistan Freedom, we recommend each member take as much time as allowed in order to get back into the pace and requirements of family and civilian life.

Recognize supportive employers. Only 6% of employers nationwide hire reservists and the vast majority are very supportive of reservist. If you have a supportive employer, consider one of the following:

A personal letter from The Adjutant General on his two star letterhead using OTAG Form 14EL-2

Nominate your employer for the Patriot Award by going on line to [www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil). We can assist

you with the nomination for the Patriot Award if you complete the OTAG Form 14EL-2 and check the block that you want your employer nominated for the award.

If you have an issue with your employer regarding your military service and you are not able to resolve we have an informal mediation program (Ombudsman Program) to assist you. To get an ombudsman to assist you, call ESGR at 800-336-4590.



Commercial Interiors West being presented the Patriot Award by Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II.

PHOTO BY TECH SGT. DAVID J. LOEFFLER

# SUSTAINABILITY

BY LT. COL. REUBEN R. SENDEJAS AND MR. DOUGLAS A. BRYCESON

High energy costs, long commutes, water shortages, air pollution, waste. We all understand the need to find solutions to these and other problems caused by our activities. Fortunately there is an answer: Sustainability.

This is the first of a series of articles on this subject which is meant to give readers background information on the subject and bring you up to date on where the California National Guard (CANG) is on becoming a sustainable organization.

The term Sustainability was first coined in a 1987 report by the United Nations who defined sustainable progress as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Today, sustainability is a global movement of people, businesses, governments, and other entities working towards a better environment for the present and the future.

Recognizing the value of sustainability, the Army adopted its Army Strategy for the Environment in October 2004. This plan focuses on the "Triple Bottom Line" of sustainability: Mission, Environment, and Community. Such a paradigm focuses our thinking on "interrelationships" in a way that allows the Army to train and deploy while safeguarding the environment and our quality of life.

Furthering the sustainability initiative, Executive Order (EO) 13423 was signed by the President

in January 2007. This order directs all federal agencies, including the Department of Defense (DoD) to implement eight goals addressing:

1. Energy Efficiency & Greenhouse Gases
2. Renewable Energy
3. Water Conservation
4. Acquisition of Goods & Services
5. Pollution Prevention & Recycling
6. New Construction & Major Renovations
7. Motor Vehicles (fleet management)
8. Acquisition of Electronic Products

In March of 2007, the National Guard Bureau (NGB) invited the CANG to participate in a "Sustainability Pilot Program." The goal of this effort was to make the CANG a model for sustainability by adapting existing DoD sustainability plans to the unique conditions of the CANG.

Using the EO goals as a framework, the Environmental Directorate convened two sustainability workshops in February and April 2008. Major General William Wade II, The Adjutant General, who was involved early in the process and threw his full support behind the sustainability initiative, opened the conference. Following the opening session, the more than 140 participants from across the state were divided into teams that developed the sustainability goals and the action plans to implement them. Over the next few months, these teams, working in long, sometimes difficult sessions, completed their work.

The conference ended with a leadership out-brief where the goals were approved, and the Sustainability Plan became a reality. Ultimately the new Sustainability Plan was deemed important enough to be integrated into the CANG's overall Strategic Plan, the CANG's guiding document for their future activities for the next 20 years.

As a result of our efforts, the CANG's Sustainability Pilot Program has been adopted by National Guard Bureau as the model program for the remaining states and territories.





## Program Aids High School Students

A program that uses the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery could help teens find their strengths and set goals for their future. The Defense Department's ASVAB Career Exploration Program consists of eight tests that measure strengths in mathematics, science, and technical and verbal skills. The results of the interest inventory and the academic and vocational parts of the test will help students identify suitable career options and identify their strengths. Two-thirds of the students who participated in the ASVAB program have found it to be useful, helping them find career options they had not considered. For more information, visit the ASVAB prep page on <http://www.military.com/ASVAB>.

## Payments for Disabled Veterans

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is reminding disabled veterans that they have until Oct. 15, 2008 to file claims for economic stimulus payments. Those eligible include people receiving benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for disability, pension or survivors' benefits. As many as one in four disabled veterans and retirees have not yet filed a claim for economic stimulus payments. For more information, find your local Taxpayer Assistance Center on the IRS Website under "Contact My Local Office," visit the IRS' Economic Stimulus Payments Information Center, or contact your nearest Disabled American Veterans (DAV) National Service Office.

## TRICARE Sponsors Internships

TRICARE Management Activity's (TMA) Student Educational Employment Program provides Federal employment opportunities to students. Young adults currently enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program, or 16 years old and enrolled in an accredited high school, may apply for the internship. The program runs until Sept. 12, 2008. The internship offers employment at each of TMA's locations across the country. For more information about the program, and the many other opportunities the government offers, visit the Student Educational Employment Program website <http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/index.asp>. To view a video on the internship program, visit the TRICARE website.

## Free Mental Health Counseling

Mental health practitioners nationwide are donating their time and services to provide free, confidential counseling to military people and their families. "Give an Hour" is a nonprofit organization that educates servicemembers and their families about the seriousness of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the importance of taking steps to combat it. The services offered by Give an Hour at [www.giveanhour.org/skins/gah/home.aspx](http://www.giveanhour.org/skins/gah/home.aspx), are free and ongoing, and providers stay in the network a minimum of a year. To receive support or to register to become part of this support network, visit the Give an Hour website. People seeking help can search for the nearest participating provider by entering their ZIP code.

## Did you know?

### THE RULES ON POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS?

All members of the Armed Forces have the right to vote, encourage others to vote, express personal opinion on political candidates and issues, serve as election officials, sign petitions for legislative action, make monetary contributions to political parties and attend political fundraising events. However, as service members, we have to adhere to Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 1344.10 para 4 to know in which political activities we can participate, what status (civilian or military) we can participate, and when we can participate.

As service members we exercise most of our political rights while off duty or in civilian clothes, but we still have certain restrictions. For example, service members can attend political fundraising events only as spectators, as long as we are not in uniform, on an active military status, and we are not giving the appearance of sponsorship, approval or endorsement to a particular party or candidate.

Read Department of Defense Directive 1344.10 para 4, POLICY for more details on military personnel involvement with political endorsement. Violations of paragraphs 4.1. through 4.5. of this Directive by persons subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice are punishable under Article 92, "Failure to Obey Order or Regulation."

## Donor Program Saves Lives

The C.W. Bill Young Department of Defense (DoD) Marrow Donor Program provides support for military personnel who volunteer as marrow donors. Registering as a marrow donor is simple and painless and can be done with either a small blood sample or an oral swab. Active-duty military members and their families, DoD civilian employees, Coast Guard members, and National Guard and Reserve personnel are eligible to register. Potential donors should be 18 to 60 years old and in good general health. For more information, call the C.W. Bill Young DoD Marrow Donor Program at 1-800-MARROW-3 (627-7693), or visit the program's website at [www.dodmarrow.org/](http://www.dodmarrow.org/)

## New 'Lemon Law' in California

An amendment to the Song-Beverly Consumer Warranty Act changed the "Lemon Law" so that it now protects all military personnel stationed in California. The Lemon Law protects consumers who buy or lease a motor vehicle that is still under manufacturer's warranty. What's more, the new amendment allows servicemembers to qualify for relief using the California Lemon Law even if their vehicle was purchased in a different state. Servicemembers can file a claim if the vehicle manufacturer sells cars in California, or the servicemember is stationed in California at the time of purchase, or at the time in which the Lemon Law action is filed.

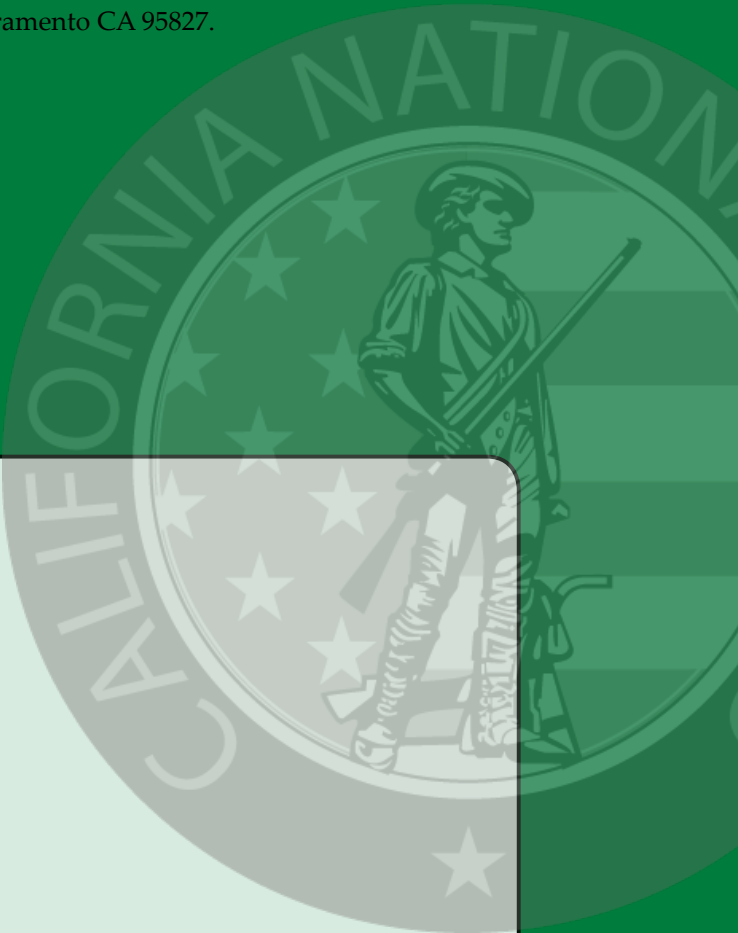




Task Force Pick, Lime Complex Hayfork Calif., California National Guard Soldiers set up a tent city in preparation to help with wild fires in northern California.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Robin D. Meredith

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